



It was a one-in-a-million accident — but Number Five, designed to be a strategic artificially intelligent weapons system, the most sophisticated robot on the planet, has escaped — and has come to the conclusion that he's alive! Now the scientist who put him together wants to take him apart

# SHORT

again to find out what went wrong.
The president of Nova Robotics wants to capture him before the weapons he's carrying kill millions of civilians.
And the security chief wants to blow him up so that he can get home in time for dinner.
YOU are Number Five...YOU are alive and YOU have got to stay that way!

TM

Ocean Software Limited Ocean House · 6 Central Street · Manchester · M2 5NS Telephone 061 832 6633 · Telex 669977 Oceans G



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New releases	waiting	to	burst	onto	the
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scene					

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Where it happens, when it happens, if
it happens

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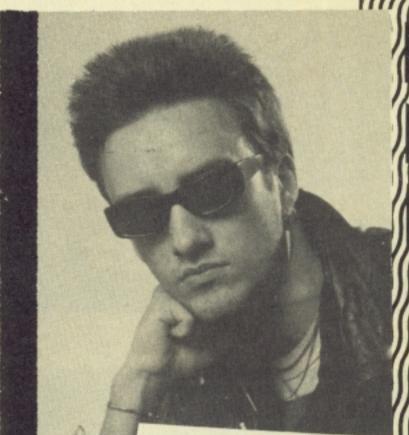
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£100 worth of prizes SEE NEWS > >

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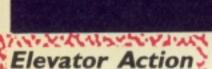
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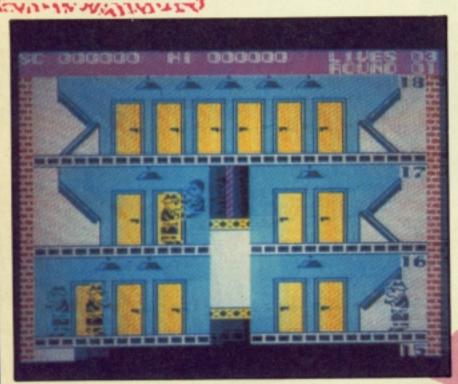
Is it all hype or are Odin on the ball?

# Elite......98

There's life in the old space-dog yet.







## **BUG BYTE'S VIRGIN**

Falcon Patrol II and Strangeloop are two very familiar titles originally from Virgin Games and have appeared on budget collections from several sources. Now Bug Byte offer them individually at £2.99 each alongside the re-issued Deathwake from sister company Quicksilva. To accompany these three, Bug Byte have also produced a BBC/Electron version of Skyhawk, the basis for Falcon Patrol, and Zagan Warrior for the C16/Plus4.

Talking of Quicksilva reminds me that Amstrad Elevator Action is also on its way for those who saw Micropool's versions a few months ago. The Quicksilva game is licensed by the arcade game originators, Taito, and costs £8.95. Which, coincindentally, will probably be the price of their current project: Grange Hill. Based on the book After Hours, the adventure will feature some of the best known characters from the ten year old TV series.

Contact: Argus Press Software Group, Victory House, Leicester Place, London WC2H 7NB (01-439 0666).

# **CUBIC RUSE**

Tigress Designs intend to squeeze every ounce of invention out of isomaze games. As major contributors to the current flow of conciousness on Ariolasoft's Reaktor label, Dave Bishop's team are anticipating the launch of Triaxos.

The game is played in an 'extraordinary cube prison' looking rather like one of the four by four Rubic Cubes which formed the second wave of yesterday's craze. Hidden in the ZED cube is a cell containing a prisoner who holds the secret to the TRIAD forces' devastating new weapon. The mission is to rescue the prisoner and free Homeland from the threat of destruction. It is a race against time because the rescuer and prisoner must rendezvous with a spaceship at a given time.

Initially available for the Amstrad CPC machines, the conversions to Spectrum and C64 are on their way. Reaktor games cost £8.95 on cassette or £14.95 on disk.

Contact: Ariolasoft, 68 Long Acre, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9JH (01-240 0247).

# CODE MASTERS' NEW WAVE

The second batch of releases from the Code Masters budget label includes White Heat, arcade action for the Spectrum, Super Robin Hood for the Amstrad and Necris Dome, a text adventure for the C64. At £1.99 each, these titles should soon be hitting the BMX Simulator trail into the charts.

Amstrad and Spectrum owners will also be seeing Professional Snooker Simulator taking its place alongside its more expensive Snooker counterparts.

Contact: Code Masters, I Beaumont Business Centre, Beaumont Close, Banbury, Oxon OX16 7RT (0295 68426).

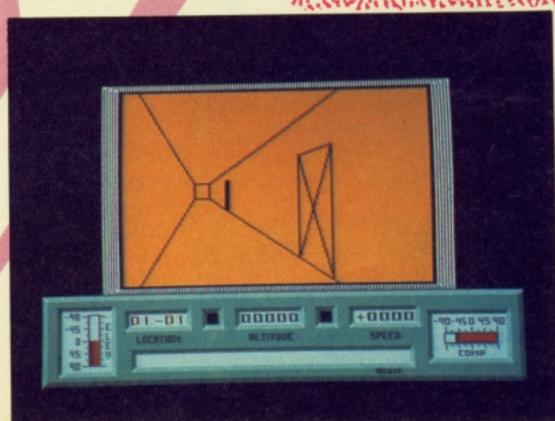


Amstrad Mercenary

# THE MERCENARY POSITION

Novagen's award winning Mercenary is still hovering around the charts over a year after its release on the C64. We recently featured the Atari ST version and now they are putting the finishing touches to the Amstrad and Spectrum conversions. The Spectrum version will appear in March and the Amstrad version should already be in the shops.

As a mixture of flight simulator, arcade adventure featuring superb vector graphics, Mercenary should give Rainbird's Starglider a run for its money at just £9.95. Amstrad disk users will have to wait until April for their version.



White Heat

> D D



# **ARIOLA'S STAR SIGN**

Ariolasoft UK have set their sights across the Channel and added Starlight Software to the stable with an exclusive European licence.

Starlight is a new company and its back from beyond managing director Francis Lee, is going for both the 8 and 16-bit machine market. Heralding its way are Greyfell — an arcventure with 3-D graphics — and Deathscape — described as a 'fight simulator'. Both will be on C64, Spectrum and Amstrad.

Ariola's Ashley Gray and Francis Lee sound optimistic about the arrangement and are wishing hard on a European commercial constellation.

Contact: Ariolasoft, 68 Long Acre, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9JH (01-240 0247).



# A GAME OF TWO HALVES

Love him or wish he'd been relegated at birth, Cloughie's back in Brian Clough's Football Fortunes from CDS. Scaling your way up the dizzy heights of the FA rungs, taking on the European lads, competing against nine other teams it's a pretty old hat-trick, but then comes the special added ingredient, 'social interaction'. Two to five players become the team managers, the rest of the ten strong league is managed by the computer. It's board-game tactics with simulation; quick thinking on your toes. You use the board for strategic advantage and haggle with other managers to secure the most profitable results - borrow players at big money prices to win an important game or fill your own coffers when they're after one of your squad.

The package consists of cassette/disk, playing board, immunity and football player cards, counters and phoney money.

Contact: CDS Software Ltd, CDS House, Beckett Road, Doncaster DN2 4AD (0302 21134).



10th Frame is the latest small-screen sport simulation from US Gold/Access and gives you the chance to play ten-pin bowling in your own shoes.

There's a league or open bowling option which can be played in teams of four and eight respectively and the animation is said to follow in Leaderboard's footsteps. Once you've plumped for amateur or professional (there's a kid's level for family-playing), there's a long view down the alley and a clinking of skittles any 60s American sit-com would be proud of.

Automatic scoring and score printout mean there's no hike back to the score table to see if you've shaken the bowling world or just effected a mild wobble. Available now on C64, Spectrum and Amstrad — Atari ST and Amiga coming soon.

Contact: US Gold Ltd, Unit 2 & 3, Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX (021-356 3236).

# All for one and one for all!

Another game from Action, those up-andcoming Swedish people, is the Three Musketeers. In the game you guide Porthos, D'Artagnan, Athos, and Aramis to England to find some missing diamonds.

A real-time adventure with graphics and over 90 locations. The game is in four loads with 63K of data per load with digitised pictures and 15 minutes of original music inspired by the classics.

The packaging consists of a magnum box in burgundy with embedded ornamentations in gold. Further releases from 'Computer Novels' include Ivanhoe, King Arthur, Around the World in 80 Days, and The Scarlet Pimpernel.

The Three Musketeers will be available for the Commodore 64 and C128 (with enhanced graphics) and the Commodore Amiga at £9.95 for the tape and £14.95 for disk (£24.95 Amiga).

Computer Novels products are available through Microdealer International on 0908 74000.







# Well known computer magazine editor believed to be helping police with their enquiries.

Many moons ago Computer Gamer ran a competition in conjunction with Domark where the winner would become the Computer Gamer entrant in competition against 11 other magazines. The prize was a golden Trivial Pursuit set stumbling towards Teesside muttering that couild be worth £10,000!

The winner and our champion was Tony Critchley from Bracknell in Berkshire. Three initial games were played with the top two from each group going forwards into the final. Unfortunately our Tony had to contend with contestants that had been on Mastermind etc

anyway, the dice were against me," exclaimed our peeved challenger as he failed heroically with lady luck pushing him out of the way and out at the first round. 0000000

0000000

Do What John.

Remember the Creative Sparks

caption competition from last

your opinions on what their

month where we asked you for

'Sparkling Superbrain' was thinking.

Apparently Creative Sparks have no

idea either as they've offered £100

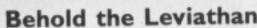
worth of software to the best

entrant.

"You little @££%\$&\*!!," exclaimed our mustachioed editor as his hands clamped our unlucky loser's neck in a vice-like grip. Our esteemed leader was last seen frothing at the mouth and something about "B"""y Commodore magazines . . .".

Young Tony fared much better. After micro-surgery to re-attach his head he was presented with his consolation prize - a Gen u II edition of the board game.

The Domark version of the board game which is available on a wide range of machines is now available for the Amstrad PCW8256/8512. On disk it costs £19.95. (Domark can be contacted on 01-947-5622).

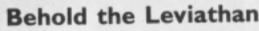


Background scenarios include lunar surfaces

A full set of instruments, devious nasties, and ground effects complete the picture to make this a candidate for the ultimate zappem game and a worthy heir

Leviathan is available for the Commodore 64 (Amstrad in the pipeline)

North Parade, Parsonage Gdns, Manchester M3 2NH.



A new zappem game from those awfully nice English Software people (they who produce Elektraglide) in Manchester. Looking like a cross between Uridium and Zaxxon, Leviathan is set to give all zappem players a

Comprising three loads, the game has stunning backgrounds, music, and effects. and ancient Grecian landcapes complete with arches, pillars, and statues. All of which the fighter flies around and behind.

apparent to Uridium's crown.

at £9.95 for tape and £14.95 for disk. English Software can be found at I

To give you another chance here before Christmas. is the young Mark Rivers in his 'contemplative' mode. Think/

speech bubbles to our usual address. Creative Sparks/Sparklers are at Unit BII, Armstrong Mall, Southwood Summit Centre, Southwood, Farnborough, Hampshire GUI4

oupetition 000 Superior are chimine a Christman Superior are claiming a Christmas hat-trick with Repton 3, Ravenskull, and Stryker's Run achieving the top three positions in the Gallup chart for the BBC micro in the weeks

> For another hat-trick Richard Hanson, boss of Superior, said "If we don't have the entire top five by the end of March I'll eat my hat". Perhaps they can make a game out

> Superior software are at Regent House, Skinner Lane, Leeds LS7 IAXPi.

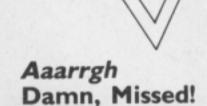
# Einstein Cheapie

The much respected Tatung Einstein computer that has enjoyed a limited success over the past few years has just had a price

The 80K computer with the built in disk drive is now available from high street h-fi chain Dixons at the low price of £149. A significant drop from when it was first available a few years ago at £399.

The Einstein comes with 80K of memory, 16 colour hi-res graphics, lots of I/O ports, and a CP/M compatible disk operating system for the in-built 3 inch disk drive. The system can now run Amstrad CP/M software as well (with a software adaptor) making it the cheapest route to CP/M. The Einstein also has loads of games available.

Details of the Einstein and Einstein 256 are available from Tatung on 0952 613111.



Here is a picture of CRL pretending to demolish their offices. This is to announce that they are launching a game called 'BallBreaker' (Ams, Com, Spec. £7.95 tape, £14.95 disk).

A prize to the best suggestion as to why somebody should REALLY demolish their offices.

CRL are at CRL House (for the moment), 9 Kings Yard, Carpenter's Road, London E15 2HD.



# Squaring the Circle

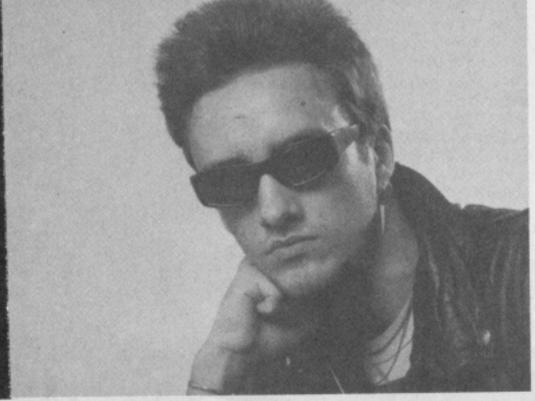
Yet another 'arcade adventure' this time from Tonbridge software house Bubble Bus. The plot revolves around the crew of a survey vessel waking up from suspended animation to find their ship taken over by strange alien beings.

The idea of the game is to free the four ship's robots and take over the rest of the ship. The ship has 255 locations and headway can only be made by cracking the alien language that the ship has been reprogrammed in.

Bubble Bus's last hit was Starquake a couple of years ago, let's hope that they have more success with this one. The game is called 'The Fifth Quadrant' and will be

available for the Spectrum, Commodore, and Amstrad.

Bubble Bus are at 87 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 IRX.







ou will have read an awful lot in the computer press recently about the fourth generation of video games consoles and how they will be over the coming years.

are extremely complex.

As you would expect, most of the games that are coming out on the machine are conversions of Sega coin-op games. Favourites such as Hang On and Choplifter (the coin-op version) are already available and will be released with eleven other games around the same time as the machine. Sega are planning to bring out a few games a week for the forseeable future there will be plenty to play with

Looking at a tide of new style home video games poised to come onto the market. Mike Roberts presents a special news feature on the three contenders for the top spot.

taking over the computer games world with excellent graphics and sound, great quality games from the coin-op world, and amazing value for money.

worked out, all that the world is quid . . . waiting for is the machines three:

Astron Card. The controllers are Amstrad or a Commodore 64. cards with a flat panel that can have a short stick attached to it, similar streets is probably going to be the to the Nintendo system. Controls created through a process of on the machine are the usual, but evolution rather than being

The only real squeeze is the price of software. Despite half of it being being very good (the other half being of the more common dubious Japanese quality) games will retail between 20 and 30 The scene is now set, the pounds - reasonable prices for systems are developed, the the American and Japanese distributors are appointed, the markets, but where good software advertising budgets have been sells in Britain for a couple of

The price of the machine falls themselves. At present there are into the middle of the range for the new systems coming out at The Sega home console is around £100. Compared to the being distributed by Ariolasoft, the cheapest computer this represents well known software company, good value for money - but you The machine features high quality should take into account the graphics, but is let down by the running costs as all you have to do sound slightly. The games are is to buy a few games and the cost stored on either cartridge or of it runs up to the price of an

The next machine to hit the to the 'wiz card'. There are two new Atari 7800. This machine has action buttons on it and it is similar had a very strange history and was also include a pause button - very revolutionary. The original Atari

useful as most of the games for it 2600 is probably the best selling Video system ever. Having been a steady seller since the mid seventies it still sells around 20,000 a year in Britain and is still manufactured (it sells at £35 if you are interested). The design philosphy applied to the 2600 was then used to create the Atari 400 and 800 in the late seventies - which are also still in full production (though slightly modified).

> The design knowledge used to create these machines was then applied to a new video game system to compete with the third generation machines appearing (Intellivision, Coleco, and Astrocade). Though a limited success in America, the new machine — the Atari 5600 — was never released in Britain. After this, the well thought out design philosophy was used to create a super video games system called the Atari Pro System. This was then sat up on for a year whilst a new range of computers were being designed. Called the Lorraine, and designed by a company called Amiga, the rest is history.

> But the new Atari video games system was still sat up on, and stayed in a cupboard for over two years until it has now emerged as the Atari 7800 system (NB. I don't know if this has got anything to do with it but 2600+5200=7800!). Using graphics one step back from the Amiga, and unbelievable sound, as well as great games from a lot of American software companies as well as Atari coin-op conversions, the system is sure to do well. Why? Because the system costs a mere £70 and the cartridges will be selling for around fifteen guid.

> The last game system to be coming out in the next few months will be the Nintendo Family Computer system. This is to be distributed by Mattel (of old

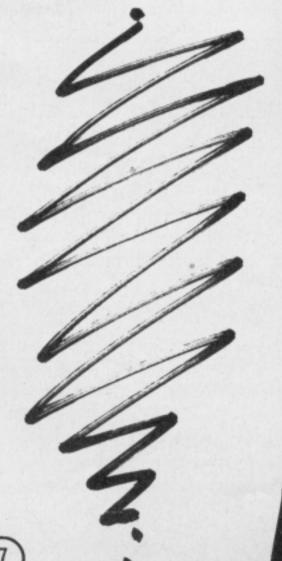
Intellivision fame) and at a price I will tell you later (otherwise you might not read the next few paragraphs!).

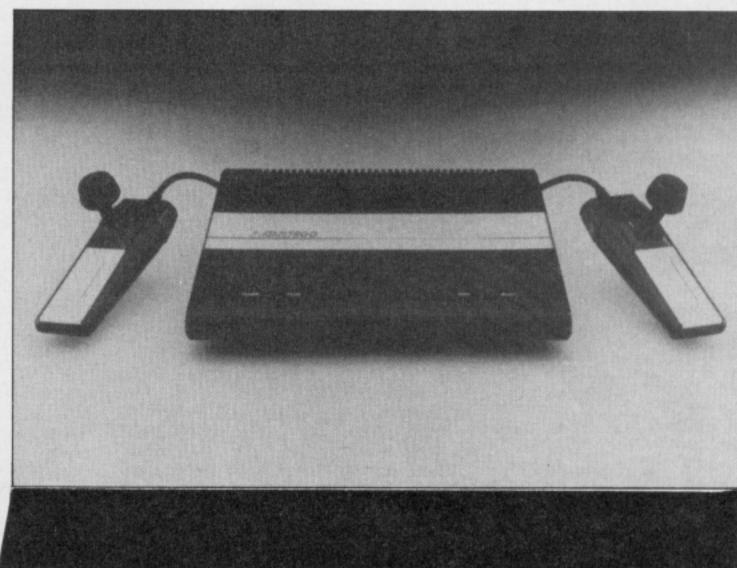
The hardware for the system is the Nintendo coin-op system not converted from, not cut down, there is no difference. Coinop freaks will recognise the same Nintendo VS from many games in the arcades. This was a standard hardware configuration that could just have a few chip changes and you'd have a whole new game (almost every other coin-up manufacturer has the same method, like the Atari system one and two, and the Bally Sente system). It is this system that the Nintendo video game uses.

64 colours, bags of memory and good sound as well as some amazing games make this the game system to aspire to. There is a range of add-ons as well, such as a robot and a light gun. This system is so popular in America and Japan (where it sells for around \$85) that Nintendo have sold cround 25 MILLION units and have all but pulled out of the coin-op business in favour of the home market.

The pinch is in the price, whilst the cartridges will be priced at the same or slightly higher than the Sega, the price of the system is expected to be around the £150 mark. This extreme (for video game systems) price is sure to bring about its failure in the British (and perhaps European) markets will the Japanese ever get it right? (mind you, if this happened in the motorbike industry I'd have a Norton parked outside of my house instead of a Honda). Perhaps there's a future for the domestic computer industry yet.

Looking at these machines, I must rate the Atari as the one most likely to succeed, it has the name, it's not Japanese, it has the software, and most of all, it has the price.





# 多UPIR SUNDAY

uperbowl season is here again and American football fever has infected us all. Along with Nexus, we would like you to be able to enjoy the thrill of the BIG game all year round, and so we've put our heads together to come up with a great idea. You can have a copy of Super Sunday all for yourself if you're one of the lucky 25 Gamers who can solve our wordsquare.

One of the lucky 25 will also receive a real American football of their own and a team shirt of their choice.

Super Sunday is Nexus' great new game which allows you to manage one of the best Superbowl teams of the past ten years. Your team faces one of the other greats in a super Superbowl competition. Challenge a friend and take control of a team each in a battle of wits to gain the supreme accolade.

# What you have to do

Hidden in the wordsquare are the names of several American Football teams. The names can be arranged vertically, horizontally or diagonally and they can be spelled out forwards or backwards. Dead easy really but be careful of the red herrings, there may be a few baseball teams in there or even a few fictitious names.

Once you have found them all, fill in the entry form in bock capitals, stick your entry in an envelope and write the number of teams on the back. Send your answers to Super Sunday Competition, Computer Gamer, ASP Ltd, I Golden Square, LONDON WIR

Your entries must reach us by 3AB. 28th February, 1987 and the winners' names will be published in our April issue.

Nexus has donated an American football shirt, ball and lots of copies of Super Sunday.

S	T	E	E	L	E	R	S	B	E	D	X	F	R
V	E	E	R	L	N	Z	A	K	J	G	R	R	5
C	R	E	A	T	0	R	0	F	C	Н	A	0	S
B	A	C	K	S	L	I	D	E	R	S	T	C	U
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# RULES

- 1. The competition is open to all UK readers of Computer Gamer except employees of Argus Press Group, their printers,
- distributors or employees of Nexus Productions. 2. All entries must be on the correct form — photocopies are not allowed. Multiple entries are allowed, but must be on the
- 3. Prizes will be awarded to entries judged to be correct by the
- 6. All entries become the property of Computer Gamer. 7. All entries must reach us by February 28th, 1987.
- 4. The editor's decision is final. 5. The entry instructions form part of the rules.
- 8. The rules form the condition of entry.

Super Sunday

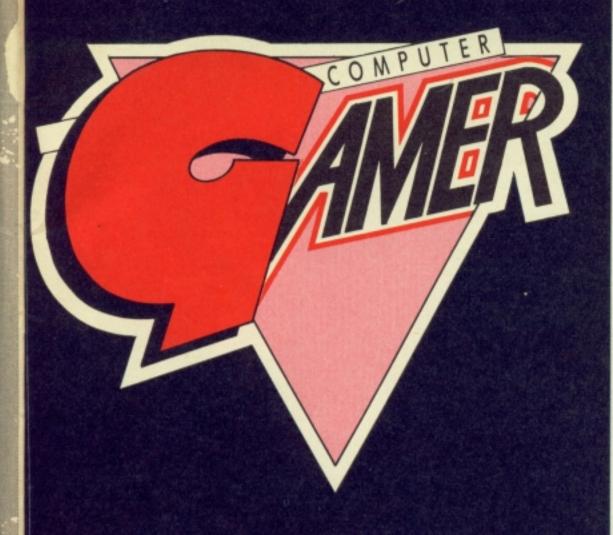
**Gamer February** 

Name .

colours:

American Football teams and I found the names of if I win the first prize I would like a shirt in the following team's

I agree to abide by the rules of the competition.



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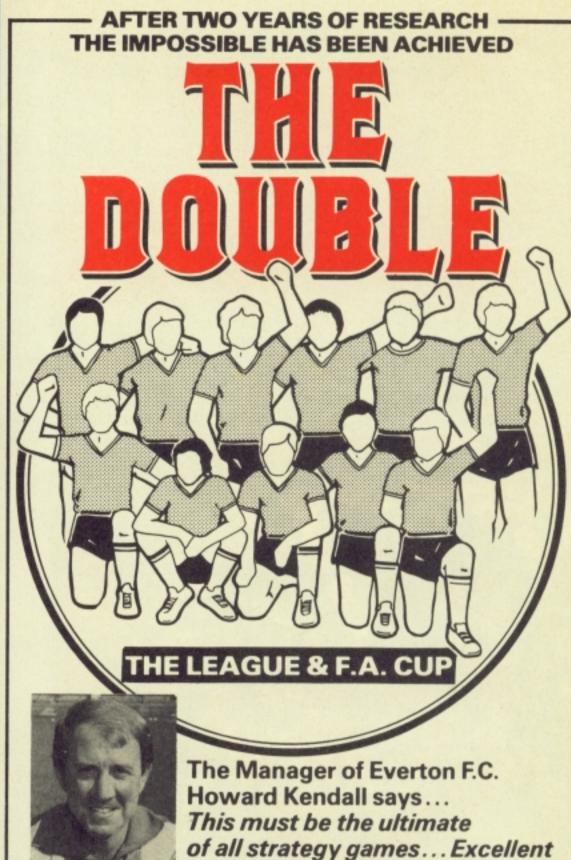
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We are always interested in paying excellent rates for program submissions from our readers. If your game is good enough to print please send it to our editorial address for assessment.

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COMMODORE 64, ATARI -

film is unique as both are better that gestate inside human hosts. android Bishop, tough and reliable Alien will attack as soon as you than the originals.

programs are usually awful. Titles established on the planet Arch- crew you must wipe out the Aliens can still be deadly. Fry such as the primitive Back to the eron. The same planet that con- and their mothers (Yes, there's Future and the awful Knight Rider, tains a ship load of Alien eggs more than one in the game just to which was completely off the waiting to hatch. Now, ten years track, sold well but soon disap- later, all contact is lost just a few pointed their players. Aliens is one days after Ripley's return. that won't.

romo was chomped by a single warriors, face huggers, the 20ft If you issue orders you run the risk survivor and finally killed the Alien game begins as the squad enter the they might have been eaten before before escaping in a hyper-sleep plant. capsule. She is finally rescued 57 years later and is taken to a space safety of the Mobile Tactical view from the helmet camera of station orbiting above the Earth. Operations Bay which is outside There she is interrogated by the infested plant. From there you

Ripley then discovers that an Private Vasquez and Burke, the fire. Games based on films or TV Atmosphere Processing plant was company man. With this motley

The company persuade her to The film is the sequel to the go back to Archeron with a squad 1979 monster hit in which the of space marines. There they find crew of the star freighter Nost- the plant is packed full of Alien Alien. Warrant Officer Ripley long Alien mother and Newt -(Sigourney Weaver) was the sole the compulsory cute kid. The you're not controlling them and

You lead the team from the Company officials who demote control the terrified but fighting Ripley, Lieutenant Gorman who is likely to crack up at any minute

liven things up!).

either directly or by issuing movement orders. I found the direct method to be better, although slower, and could safely ferry my crew through the base. of Aliens attacking your crew while you get a chance to save them.

The screen display shows the the crew member you've selected and their smart (computer aimed, video targetted, automatic weapon) gun sight, their ammunition level and the bio-monitor bar and room number for each crew mem-

By controlling the gun sights you can look around the room you are in although your fellow marines remain invisible. The doors open automatically unless the lock mechanisms have been blasted but even then you can blast your way through by taking out the door with your smart gun. A locked door may hold back the Aliens for a while but when they finally break through you'd better be ready for action.

Fighting Aliens requires accuracy and timing. If you stumble across one or they find you, your proximity alarm sounds and you've only got a few seconds to spin around to find it. A single shot to the head is enough for the warriors or three to the body but

his sequel of the game of the her and ridicule her story of Aliens quick reacting Corporal Hicks, the you'd better be on target as the

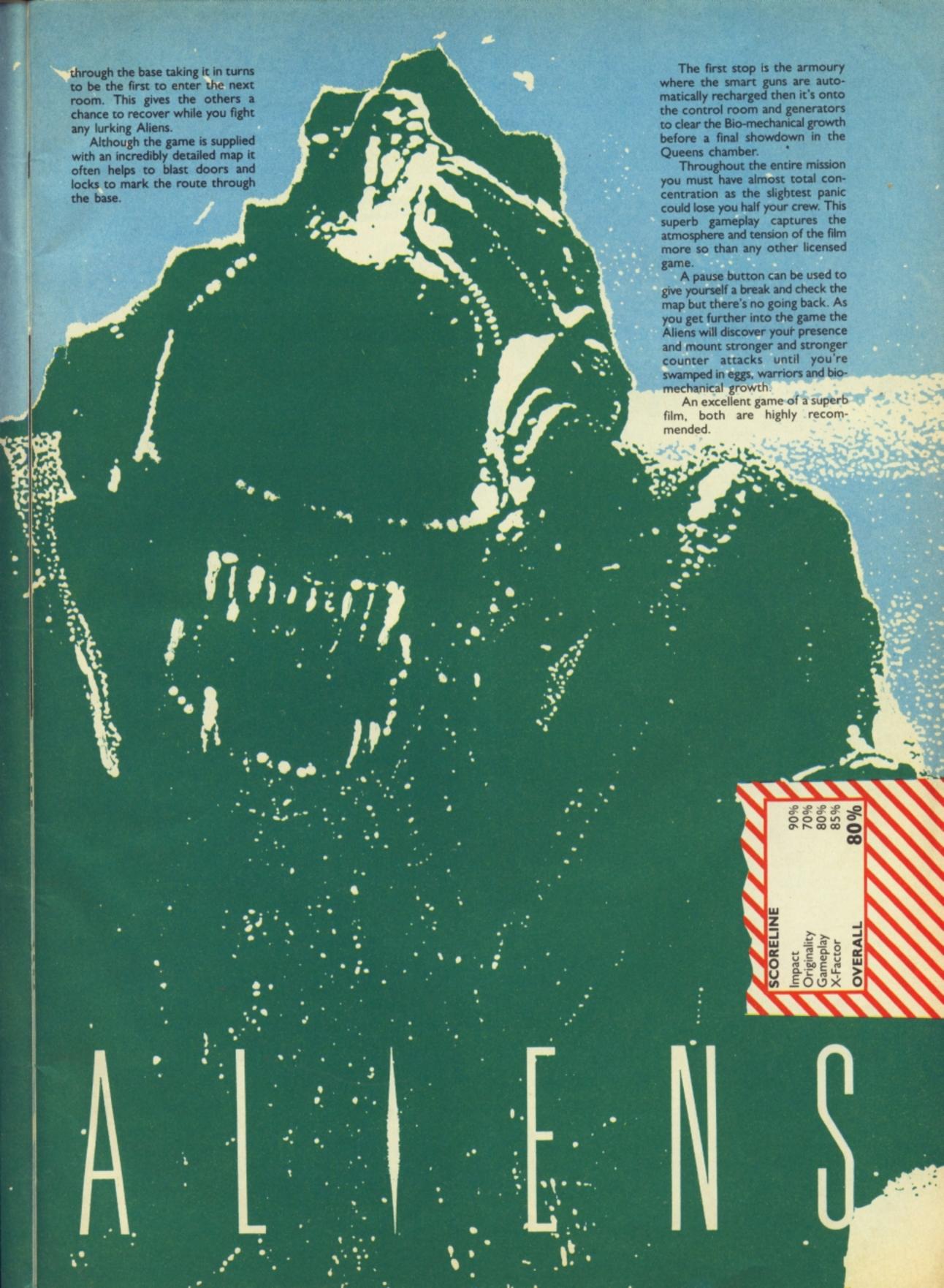
Even when you've killed them, an Alien by a door and you risk leaving a pool of it's deadly acid blood blocking the way. It will You can control your squad eventually evaporate but it may be too late. Wherever there are Aliens you face the threat caused by Bio-mechanical growth. This grows all over the walls and spreads. If you don't control it (by frying it) it will spread into the air ducts filling the base with face huggers and eggs. If it overruns the control room or the generators your mission will become almost impossible as the lights will fuse and you'll be plunged into darkness.

I found the best tactics to be to ferry your crew room by room











# Gordon Hamlett goes digging for treasure and uncovers a gem of a game

that were around for some time on the BBC before being converted to other machines can be counted on precisely two fingers; Elite and Revs. Enter a third digit. Repton 3 is one of the most addictive games that I have played for a long time.

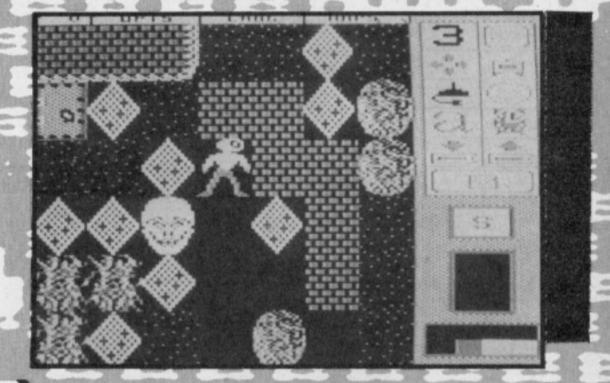
The game consists of twentyfour different screens, the object being to find a time bomb on each screen and defuse it. Before the bomb can be rendered harmless that must be overcome first. The screen must be cleared of diamonds and monsters and the crown retrieved.

Your major hazards as you attempt to accomplish all this are the rocks. Balanced precariously on diamonds or lumps of earth, obey the law of gravity when un-

he number of good games crushing it with a rock. Left to its screens and characters or just are bright and colourful but not which spreads inexorably unless easier/harder. checked. And all this must be done against the clock. After all, what use is a time bomb if it does not explode after a given amount of for you not to mind. The graphics games I have ever come across. time. There are however time capsules which reset the clock. These are normally positioned in such a way that you could have reached them if only you had another two though, there are several obstacles seconds available. Well, they are in my case!

The key to the game though is the problem solving, and pretty tricky some of them are too. Several small puzzles frequently go into making up a larger one. Objects need to be collected in specific orders otherwise you find they have an unerring tendency to yourself cut off from them later. Careful use should also be made of supported. If you happen to be the one-time teleporters. One of underneath at the time, all that the hardest problems is enticing happens is that you get a nasty the spirits into the cages. It is easy headache and lose one of your if the cages are conveniently

own devices, it will chase and, on change the parameters and colours particularly stunning but who gives contact, kill you. Then there is the of the existing ones in order to a hang when the gameplay is as fungus, again deadly to touch and make them that little bit good as this. The relationship between difficulty and compulsion OK, so it does remind you of to have just one more go, is just Boulderdash somewhat, but Rep- about perfect. Repton 3 is quite ton 3 has enough original features simply one of the most addictive



**REPTON 3** Title: Computer: BBC/C64

SUPERIOR SOFTWARE Supplier:

Price: £9.95 (cass) £11.95 (disk)

you can no longer find a way the maze. Now this may come as a shock to those of you whose game playing philosophy is if it moves, kill it' but in Repton 3, you are actually required to exercise those grey cells whose normal use is keeping your ears apart.

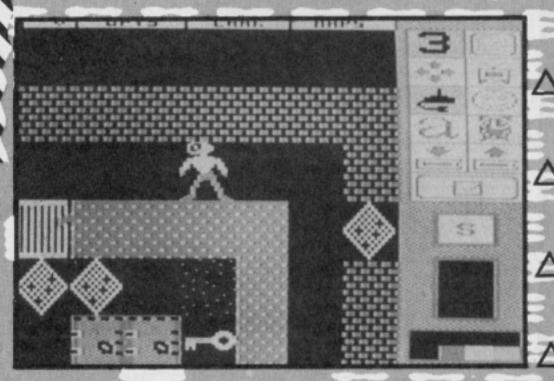
Not that the rocks are your sole problem. To start with, not all the diamonds that you need to collect are present. Some are hidden in safes. These areas are impassable until you find the key thereupon transmuting all the safes into gems and allowing you access to other parts of the maze. There are also spirits floating around. These have to be lured into cages and so turned to diamonds. The only help you have in accomplishing this is that they always follow the left hand wall.

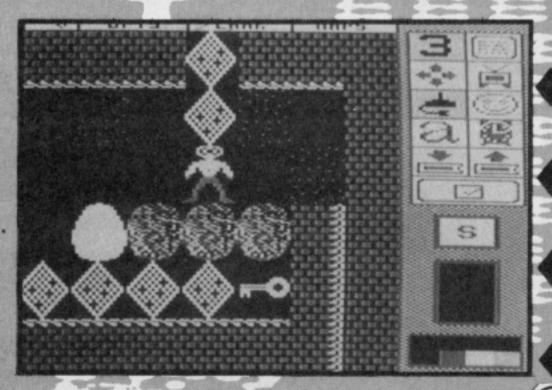
Eggs are perfectly safe until you disturb them. Then they promptly crack open and a baby monster hatches out. This must be killed by

lives. What tends to happen more positioned along an edge, but what frequently is that you discover that if they are in the middle of a room. Then boulders have to be shunted through to a particular section of from miles away and dropped into single mistake, for if you accidently remove the wrong piece of earth, forget it, you will have to start that screen again. There are maps of the screens to help you plan your route but these are only available on certain levels.

One of the best things about Repton 3 is its presentation. Each screen has a password so that you don't have to play through from the start every time. Solve the entire game and you can enter in a prize draw. And if by any chance you do complete it all and are getting bored with it, a full editor is also included. Design your own

1111.	
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Originality	75%
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few months ago I wrote a

review of the Doctorsoft

flight simulator 'Double

Phantom' where two BBC

micros were connected to-

gether via a bit of ribbon cable and

two players could fight against each

other in their respective aircraft.

was excellent and the gameplay

was alright but that the game itself

was too involved and complex

being more of a flight simulator

At the time I said that the idea

**TOP GUN** Title: Computer: AMSTRAD CPC Supplier: **OCEAN** £8.95 Price:

two forward views. The planes in question are dogfighting F-14 American air superiority fighters. Armed with 20mm cannon, sidewinder heat-seeking air-to-air missiles, and flare decoys, along with a cockpit full of electronic flight aids.

The vertical split screen is one that I haven't seen before but one that works extremely well. The bottom section of the screen is the instrument panel, which leaves the actual action area of the screen as a square. Which is a very reasonable shape to use in this context.

The instruments consist of a top-down radar display of your immediate vicinity. Thrust, gun temperature, missile lock-on time, and damage indicators are all on barchart/thermometer type displays.

square for the missile targetting, and no sight for the flare mode. It may all sound a bit cluttered, but it is very easy to read, especially at high speed (ie. most of the time). The important instruments

# Each mission gets harder and harder

have extra warnings to them, such as the altitude flashing when you get too low and the plane bouncing slightly when you approach stalling

The game is either played headto-head, where two players get three planes each and the winner is the last one flying. Or as a one player game against the computer. The one player version is set out as 'missions'. Each mission pits you against three enemy aircraft one at a time. When you have eliminated them you go onto the next level.

Each mission gets harder and harder. In mission one, the planes just use their guns on you. In mission two, they use flares and can avoid your missiles. These first two missions can be polished off with no loss because the cannons that the enemy planes use are no match for your missiles. However, if missions one and two are dead easy, the third mission is almost impossible.

Mission three is where the enemy planes start to use missiles. To understand why this makes winning almost impossible it is necessary to understand how the sidewinder missiles work in this implementation. The sight in front of you changes to a square about an inch across. To target the missile you have to hold the enemy in your sights for three seconds. When this is happening you get a beeping noise and the missile countdown bar reduces. As this reaches the bottom you get a continuous tone. If at any time the enemy drops out of your sights. you start the three seconds again. Pressing fire sends the missile after SCORELINE the target.

Imagine if you can, two planes approaching each other from afar.

Both have their missile systems.

Gameplay Both have their missile systems X-Factor engaged, both lock on, and both fire almost simultaneously (the OVERALL computer can always see you a

microsecond before you see him). The result, at best, is a draw with both aircraft being hit. The only way I found to play the level properly was to use my guns at long range for the few seconds that I was being targetted. This considerably damaged him. When the missile was launched I then switched to flare mode (next one up from guns), accelerated at maximum towards the missile and dived just before it hit. At this point you can then run rings around the enemy plane (thus avoiding being in its sights for the required three seconds).

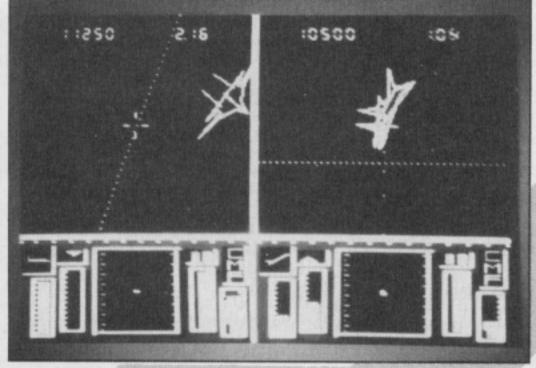
After 20 seconds the missile will burn out, or the flares that you are dropping will decoy it. Then you can start on the enemy craft with your cannons. With any luck, the damage that you have done to it earlier will be enough to even up the difference between you. Shooting down one plane like this and suiciding into the other two is the only way that I have managed to get to level four (don't ask about level four!).

The graphics are fairly crude but completely in keeping with the

style of the game. The vector graphic picture of the enemy F-14 is excellent and it moves just as you

would expect. The vector explosion is also great.

The game is very fast and would be totally unplayable otherwise. My only reservation is



than a game (I used the phrase 'flight simulator' as an insult in this context). At the time I said that if anyone could come up with a head-to-head flight combat game with the playability of ACE I would be a very happy man.

With Top Gun, Ocean get very close. The game is a one or two cally split screen to provide the crosshair for the cannons, a largish

The speed (in Mach) and height are at the top of the screen in figures. The other instruments are the attitude (which way up you are), whether the enemy is above or below you, which weapon has been selected, and the enemy missile indicator.

In the centre of the screen is player combat game with a verti- the sight. This has three modes, a

# For head-to-head air combat this is definitely the tops

that the game could be a little more realistic in controlling the plane, I found it very difficult to fly inverted loops, and the self centering of the joystick was a bit of a bind.

For head-to-head air combat this is definitely the tops. Along with ACE, they are the most enjoyable flight games that I have ever come across. Sure to be a hit.

I've not seen the film, but who cares? The game is excellent.

A single from the film Top Gun was a smash hit. Will the game have the same success. Mike Roberts climbs into the hot seat.

Impact 80% 95% 95%



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# J. B. SOFTWARE

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# TOP NOTCH

ast year, Alan Sugar put the cat amongst the pigeons by launching the Amstrad PC, a machine which offers IBM 'compatibility' (for those people who feel they really must have it) at an affordable price. Around the same time, Mirrorsoft started to import high quality software from America for the Macintosh, slashing prices to half that of the Stateside original.

The effect these developments had on the games market was not particularly dramatic but was significant all the same. This is more true of the Amstrad PC, since the Macintosh is still far too expensive to be a major force in the entertainments field. Which is a paradox, since the games emerging for Apple's machine are some of the most exciting to appear on any micro, including the redoubtable Amiga.

Mirrorsoft distributes software from several sources. But of all the names on its books, there is one that stands head and shoulders above the rest. Mindscape, an Illinois-based company, has original and imaginative software, not only for the Macintosh but also for the Amiga.

One of Mindscape's most inventive games is Deja Vu, an elaborate graphical adventure, that uses every trick in the Macintosh's repetory to make the player feel he is part of the world within the game, rather than a passive voyeur.

In Deja Vu you play a character, similar to those in '50s B-movies, called D.O.A (Dead On Arrival). You begin the game by waking-up in the squalid toilet of a rundown downtown bar. Where you are and how you got there eludes you, as does everything else, since you've been injected with a lethal mixture of truth drugs. Unless you can find the antidote, you will become, to put it bluntly, dead meat.

As the game evolves, cleverly interspersed flashback sequences provide insight into your past, enabling you to

gradually piece together the events leading up to your falling foul of . . . whoever.

Deja Vu works because it does away with the keyboard almost entirely, and allows you to investigate its various locations simply using the Macintosh's mouse. The majority of objects shown onscreen are icons, which can be pointed to, picked up, and planted in an inventory window to one side of the main display. Many pieces procured in this way can be opened by double clicking the mouse's button. Some things even contain smaller articles which themselves can be opened to reveal a further object.

Not only can items be picked up and examined, but they can also be used to cause an effect. For instance, one of the lcons is a gun. To fire it you first point at the gun, then at an option called operate, and then finally at the target you wish to shoot at. The gun goes off with a bang and, if you are lucky enough



to hit what you were aiming at, the picture changes to show the havoc caused.

Another option, 'hit', works in very much the same way as firing the gun. This comes in very handy when tackling a mugger, who has a habit of always turning up at the worst possible time. Striking out at your attacker sends him running, only to return several moves later with either a black eye, a broken nose, or even a mouth full of smashed teeth.

I first saw Deja Vu towards the earliest part of 1986. Since then, Mirrorsoft has released Mindscape's second adventure. Uninvited relies heavily on the tricks that can be performed with the Macintosh's WIMP operated system, though this time there is the added bonus of digitised sound.

Uninvited is a wierd tale about the spooky goings on in the house of Alistair Crowley. The object of the game is to rescue your brother from the house, after having wandered into it following a

terrifying car crash.

Like Deja Vu, Uninvited features superb graphics, lots of tricky puzzles, and odd touches of animation. On top of all that, there are some superb digitised sounds, including the baying of distant hounds, creaking doors, an old phonograph, thunder, and even a scream. All of which go to make Uninvited an unforgettable experience.

One of the most recent Mindscape products to come out through Mirrorsoft is Defender Of The Crown. This is one of the most artistically accomplished games yet to appear on the Amiga, being composed of beautifully designed screen, drawn, I'm informed, using Electronic

Art's DPaint software. Defender Of The Crown is a strategic simulation in which the player takes the role of the Saxon lord who, together with two others, is trying to keep the English throne out of the clutches of the Normans, following the murder of King

Richard II.

The throne is won by overthrowing three Norman lords, whose castles are based in the South of England. Gain control of a large enough army to defeat these lords, the player must win land to reap enough taxes to pay for soldiers, knights and catapults.

Money needn't always come from taxes, but can also be had by sacking the coffers of another lord. On the other hand, land need not be gained by force, but can be won in a joust on the fields

of Ashby-De-La-Zouche.

The road to victory is strewn with danger, although it does have its more pleasurable moments. For instance, Norman lords often play host to reluctant Saxon women whom they imprison in the towers of their castles. Were the player to rescue one of these lusty maidens, he would be rewarded with the lady's favour and finally her hand in marriage, a partnership that boosts your lord's morale no end.

Throughout Defender Of The Crown there are numerous full screen pictures that far outstrip those seen in anything else. The inside of a castle, for instance, is depicted as a shadow filled hall with flaming torches adorning the walls, while the joust sequence actually makes you

feel as if you're astride one of the horses.

Defender Of The Crown is a masterly and colourful twist on the old 'Risk' or 'Kingmaker' scenario. Even with its superb graphics, it still has enough depth to hold your attention right to the end of the struggle for the throne - which can be quite a long time.

Another company that has been writing adventures for some years now is Infocom, another American based software house, whose products are distributed in the UK by Activision. Unlike Mindscape's adventures, Infocom's are all text based. At first this might be offputting to those players who like their games to be full of graphics, but it really doesn't reduce your enjoyment, since the atmosphere created by Infocom's writers is both imaginative and vivid.

Two of Infocom's latest releases, Leather Godesses Of Phobos and Trinity, come in IBM format, although they are available for other machines as well.

Leather Godesses Of Phobos is a risque tale about a race of alien

Up until now, Infocom games have been relatively serious affairs. Leather Godesses is its first in a series of tongue in cheek (though they don't say whose cheek) adventures. From what I've seen of this one, the same high standards have been retained by Infocom. However the level of humour, which never really rises above that of a 14 year old schoolboy, leaves a lot to be desired. The company's second new release, Trinity, is much more in keeping with its old style, and a lot more stimulating intellectually than Godesses.

Trinity is a frightening story centred around World War III, in which you play the part of an American tourist in London. When the game begins you find yourself taking a morning constitutional through Kensington Gardens. In the time that it takes to walk from one side to the other, London is vapourised by an Hbomb. The only way for you to survive the same fate as that of the city's people is to slip through into another dimension.

As new bombs explode, so doorways open onto other worlds and strange

Game CDeja Vu Uninvited Defender Of The Crown Leather Goddesses of Phobos O Trinity

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domnatrixes who plan to invade Earth and turn its inhabitants into sex slaves. Your task, after being abducted by the Leather Godesses and imprisoned on a Martian moon, is to escape and thwart their plan of world domination. The only way to do that is to build a machine that will bring about their downfall. Unfortunately the items necessary to construct the machine are scattered over several planets, and none of them are particularly easy to get hold of once you've located them.

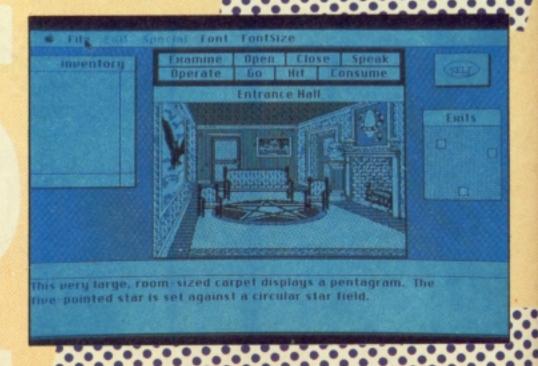
One of the nice things about Infocom games is that they always come packaged with unusual paraphanalia. Leather Godesses, as well as containing a disk and playing card, also comes with a pair of 3D glasses for reading a specially drawn comic strip of the story and a scratch 'n' sniff card containing a fairly repulsive selection of smells, each of which you are asked to sniff at various points in the

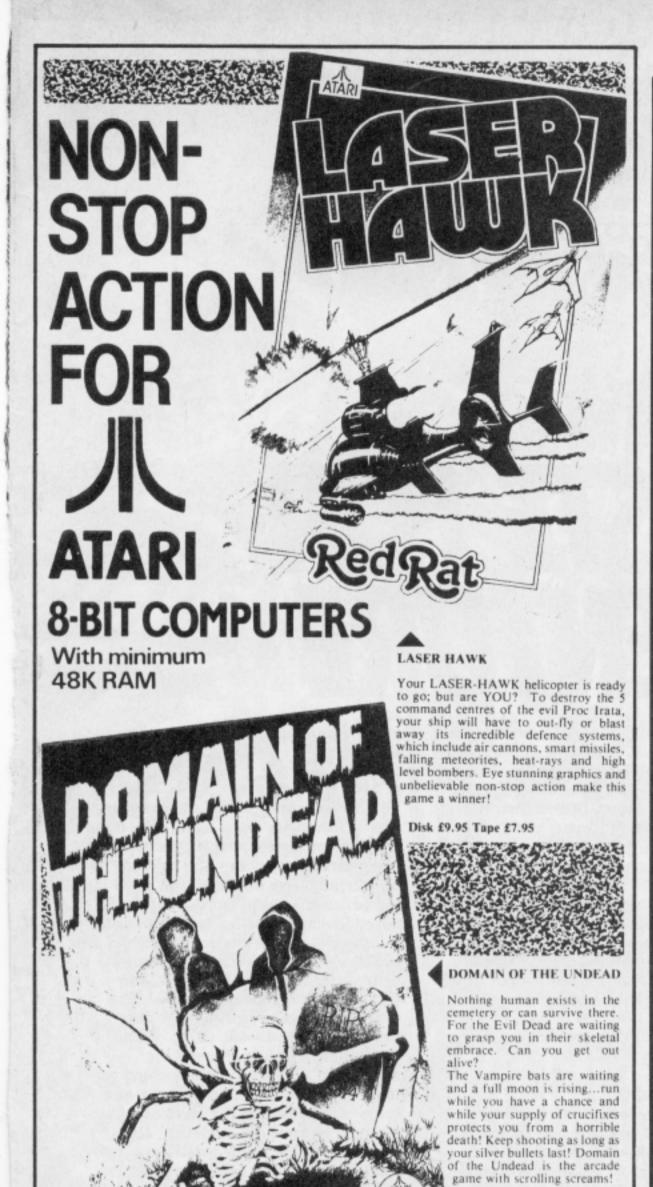
dimensions. However, to enter such places you must first escape London.

If you should unlock the secrets of these worlds, says the Trinity manual, you will end up in the New Mexico desert, just before the world's first atomic explosion. The untimate aim, I guess, since I haven't completed the adventure, is to prevent the test happening.

Unlike any other adventure I have played before, clues in Trinity are picked up by unravelling the quotes of famous poets, writers and scientists. These hold the keys to the doorways and events that lead back to the New Mexico desert on a day in July, 1945.

Both Leather Godesses Of Phobos and Trinity are graded as Standard Level Infocom adventures. Which is to say that anyone buying them will get weeks, or even months of enjoyment.





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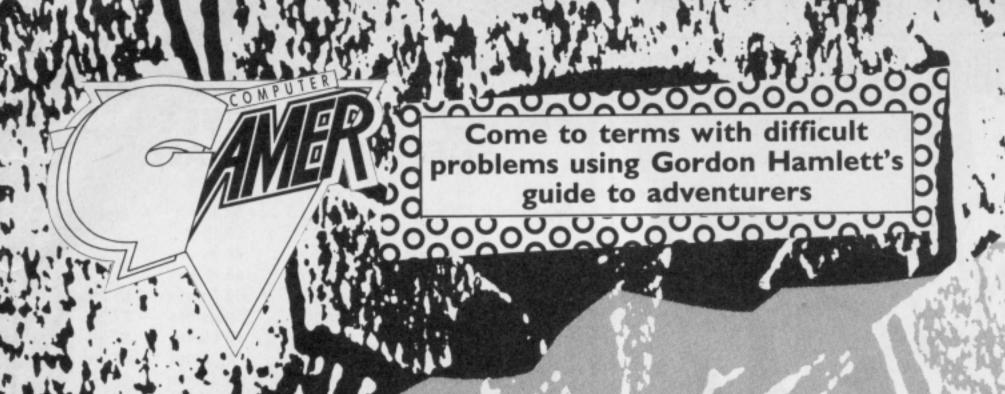
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# ATASTE FOR ADVENTURE

he main problem with playing adventures for the first time is an inability to come to terms with the puzzles and problems within a game. I can sit here 'til the cows come home (or at least until Manchester City win a game) saying that I think game A is great and game B rubbish, but that doesn't help you very much if you can't find a way of opening the door in the first location.

Unfortunately, there is no universal panacea — you only have to look at adventure pages in any magazine to realise that. Pleas galore from experienced players who just cannot fathom out a particular problem — one that is annoying them so much that they feel compelled to write in and ask for help.

Before your sense of impending doom reaches epic proportions, let me pinch a phrase from Hitch-hikers Guide to the Galaxy — DON'T PANIC. A systematic approach to playing adventures should yield considerable rewards. No, it won't tell you how to open that aforementioned door, but it will tell how to go about getting the job done.

Solving an adventure is a bit like trying to do a cryptic crossword. Initially incomprehensible, you slowly get used to a certain style of clue and certain conventions that crop up again and again. Thus, if you find a monster blocking a path, the chances are that you will either have to bribe it to go away (food and treasure are the most likely), kill it (usually with a specific weapon) or scare it off (showing a mouse to an elephant etc.) Once you have the basic idea, you will find that most solutions are just variations on a theme. So here are a few basic ideas to get you started.

I. Always get the full story Imagine trying to solve a whodunnit if someone has torn a couple of chapters out of the middle. Not impossible but a lot more difficult. The same applies to adventures. The descriptions are there to help you. Make sure you read them all. Examine every object that is described in the text. Even if you get a 'there is nothing special' type response, that is still useful as the chances are that that particular feature plays no important part in the game - negative clues can be just as helpful as positive ones. Authors are getting progressively more cunning in how they disguise important objects so this really is important. It is also worth typing 'examine qwerty' or some other gibber ish, just to see how the program responds to words that you know are not in its vocabulary.

2. Draw a map

Or rather draw several maps, Murphy's Law says that if anything can go wrong, it will. Hamlett's Law of Adventuring say that Murphy was an optimist! Wherever you start drawing your map, you can guarantee that the paths will immediately take you off the edge of the paper. Redraw and revise as often as possible. Nothing elaborate is required. A box for each location containing some way of identifying the room plus brief details of the contents and puzzles, eg Crypt, Silver Mace, 4 skeletons, That's all. Nothing elaborate. Be sure to mark on the locations of all exits, even if you can't immediately go that way. This will remind you which areas of the game have still to be explored.

3. What's it for?

Never amongst of the more generous types, adventure authors don't go scattering objects around for the fun of it. Every item has a purpose. If it is not a treasure, then you will have to use it at a later stage of the game. Try to imagine what as soon as you find something. Again, the obvious often holds true. Weapons are for fighting. Containers are for putting something in. Magnets attract

metal etc. Keep notes of what objects do what.

4. Use the parser

The parser is the part of the program that 'understands' your input. The trend is to go for highly complex parsers that understand prepositions and multiple objects etc. This is all well and good but my advice is keep it simple. Try to say exactly what you mean in as few words as possible. Where the extra facilities are useful are in cases such as 'kill dragon with sword' as opposed to just 'kill dragon' or 'tie rope to window'. The extra couple of words make it clear exactly what you want to do. Read the instructions carefully. I know the temptation is to load the game and get started straight away but you can gain some useful ideas. If the blurb says the program understands 'exorcise', the chances are that there is someone or something that will need exorcising. As this is not the sort of word you are likely to come across by chance, you would be stuck unless you had a relevant hint.

5. Two heads are better than one. This is my final tip for this month. There is bound to come a time when you are stuck. You get fixed ideas in your head and none of them work. Try playing the game with a friend and bouncing ideas and possibilities off each other. You will be amazed how often you come up with an answer between you that neither of you thought of individually. If that still fails to provide the goods, try to ignore that problem for the time being and go and explore somewhere else. One of the nice things about the games mentioned in last month's Gamer is that they all have huge areas to explore. You are not stuck on one particular problem with nowhere else to go. Of course there comes a time when all problems have to be solved eventually, but you can cross that bridge when the time comes - if the troll will let you!



Computer: Commodore 64

Supplier: Activision

Price: £17.95 (disk)

It's been a long time since the last Activision product, and those of us who miss the excellent David Crane (Pitfall II, Ghostbusters, Little Computer People, etc) will be looking forward to this latest batch of imports with some enthusiasm. 'Howard' arrived in some impressive packaging and had all the hallmarks of a real winner - I broke into my belated Christmas present with uncustomary glee.

First, however, a bit of history: Howard the Duck was a Marvel comic in the mid-Seventies that attracted a cult following, ran for a few issues, and then disappeared. Legend has it that the great American kid, weaned on a diet of real sentimentality and real violence, found the flippant approach of the comic less than attractive.

Howard the Duck (later re-titled 'Howard - a new breed of hero') was also a potential blockbuster movie in the mid-Eighties with a cult following. Unfortunately the cult caught up with it and kicked it into little bits. Just about everyone has now dubbed the film a disaster of biblical proportions and George Lucas must be longing for the old breed of hero that made him a fortune in Star Wars, and Indiana Jones. The sad truth is that here, as in the comic, the joke about a wisecracking duck that smokes cigars, likes girls, and reluctantly fights

surrounding the film. Beautifully presented, and well programmed, it rates as one of Activision's better recent releases and deserves consideration outside its unfortunate tie-in.

The plot is to overthrow the Dark Overlord (obviously you must find him first) and your task is split into phases that attempt to cover all of Howard's fictitious abilities. At the start you parachute onto the island, and your first hassle is to recover the backpack that was obviously thrown clear in landing.

The island is really several strips of land separated by water, Mutant Slime (more of this later) or foliage, and it is revealed to you in a pseudo 3D, bird's eye perspective as you move around its surface. Howard himself is truly duck-like, with a slow waddle and a comical Quack-Fu kick when confronted by enemies. These take the form of sprites which pop up from mounds in the ground and home in on you as you move. One kick sends them spinning, and thus helpless, and a second kills them. On later levels they are immobilised for less and less time and come at you in greater and greater numbers. You may, however, destroy their source by jumping on the mounds themselves, although if you're not

can cross water after this) destroying all the mounds on the island, and then crossing the rope-bridge. Scattered around are patches of Slime that can only be leaped over (I found the animation on this a bit weak) and you may walk or swim (sort of ...) in one of four directions. Level 2 takes you to the top of the volcano using the micro-lite aircraft you found in the backpack (handy, eh?). Level 3 takes you through the volcano, dodging cravasses and falling stalactites as you go, and finally the last level lets you use your Neutron gun to shoot the Overlord himself. Then you just have to get out again before it all blows.

Of the 4 levels the second was dull - little more than left, right and up until you land, and the others were passable sub-games in themselves. The graphics were always colourful and generally well designed, and in making sense of a film license Activision have once again shown the others how. Taken all together, however, I felt the slowness of the gameplay less than addictive. The cute waddle that gives your hero his immediate appeal soon becomes tiresome, and the fighting sequences were not varied or fast enough to keep me involved. For the younger player I cannot recommend Howard highly enough but I fear the seasoned gamester will play it twice and never return again.



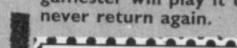
# Tina Milan thinks Howard might go down with the littlies. Is she quacking up?

crime wears thin in no time at all. What's left is a poorly drawn image that lacks most of the charm of better known cartoon ducks.

Don't, however, avoid this game because of the adverse publicity

quick you will find yourself surrounded and trapped.

The game has four levels, which unfortunately have to be accessed separately from disk. Level I involves finding your backpack (you



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**OVERALL** 

SCORELINE

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# troops to man your armies and garrison your city and initially you can choose

Welcome to another PBM Update. This has been a very hectic month for me but the arrangements for the PBM Convention are now complete and I have been able to round up the news from the hobby. This month the features are a good look at Arcadia from Jade Games and some ideas on how to start up your own fantasy game. I hope to see many of you at the convention. However if you can't make it but would still like to know a bit more about PBM, just send me a large stamped addresses envelope at the Gamer office and you will recieve a free copy of the soon to be published "Guide to PBM '87", which at present is offered exclusively to Gamer readers.

## Calling Scandinavia

PBM is very popular in Scandinavia and quite a few Gamer readers have written to me from this area. A happy New Year to all the Norse alliances and here is a message just for you;

Hallo alle Computer Gamer lesere i Norge, Sverige og Danmark. Jeg hoppas dere tycker PBM Update. Huorfor ikke skrive til mej huis dere har noe paa hjertet (skriv paa engelsk).

My thanks to Peggy Stalsberg (Holy Mary of the Cop Killers) for the translation.

One of the advantages of postal gaming is that distances mean very little. Players from all over Europe are active in British PBM and I would be pleased to hear from them with their thoughts on this pastime. Please write in English for I'm no linguist.

### Arcadia

It is always good to see a new company doing well and Jade Games strike me as one that is going to challenge the major names in 1987. They have two new games under development and have recently negotiated a deal to write play by modem games for Atari. Their established game is called Arcadia and, though it has only been running for about nine months, has already attracted over 500 players.

Jade describe Arcadia as a 30 player fantasy wargame and this sums it up very well. You start the game with one city under your control, three armies for scouting, fighting, exploration and conquest. Two wozums — birds that can be used for information gathering purposes and two rocs, whose main

purpose is to capture wozums. You have a number of points to allocate towards troops to man your armies and garrison your city and initially you can choose from fairy, undead, or orc warriors. Later on you will have the chance to recruit mercenaries from other races.

The aim of the game is to achieve the position where you and your allies control all the cities in the game. There are 40, ten being free cities initially controlled by the computer. You will probably find that in the early stages you will be interested in recruiting and exploring, and there are many weird and wonderful things to discover but probably most important at this time is to establish alliances, even if you intend to renounce them later on. Arcadia is not a game that you can win alone so write to as many players as possible. Everyone starts the game at the same time so if you can gain an early advantage you will be well set up for later on.

For the wargamer the main tactical skill comes when attacking other cities. There are lots of options regarding battle plans and organisation within your alliance also comes into play. Fighting can occur when you meet armies controlled by other players or by the computer, but here it is more a question of numbers and the retreat factor that you set for your troops.

If the fantasy element of the game appeals to you, then you will probably be a bit disappointed early on. Early rounds are entitled 'Phase one, the dawn of a new era' and this is a time of exploration and fortification. You will however find spell scrolls and magic artifacts though their uses may not become apparent until a later phase.

Trade is also a major part of the game. Other armies will not necessarily be hostile and may have items that could be of great use to you for sale or barter. The free cities may be beyond your capabilities for conquest but are important trade centres.

Here are my tips for the game and you may reject them as you wish. I must admit that my success at this game has been limited to say the least. However, you may learn from my mistakes.

Make sure that you leave enough troops in your city to adequately defend it

As soon as you have enough money from selling your grain in the markets, increase your grain production rate, increase your recruitment rate and start building walls and towers around your

# PANGEA

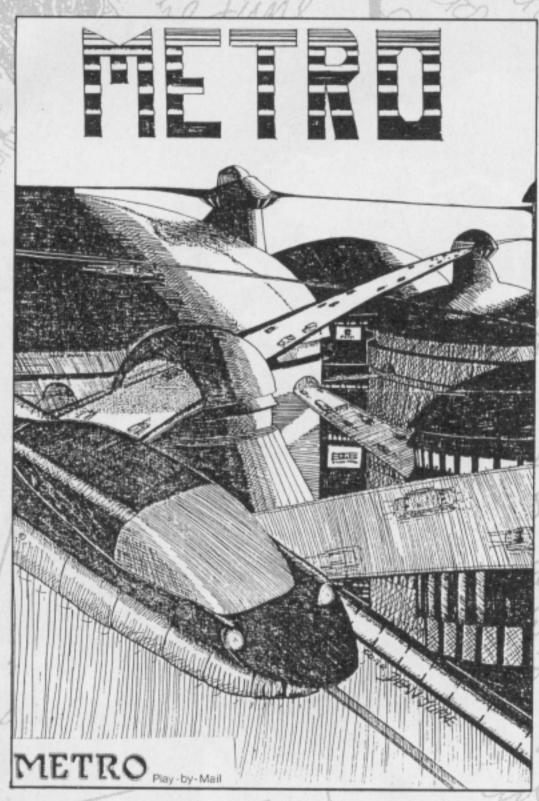
PLAYTESTERS RULEBOOK



ANVIL GAMES



Postal gaming is increasing in popularity as each month passes. Mike McGarry takes up his post as surveyor of the scene.





Always leave one army within one move of your city if possible.

Never trust any other player

If you get the chance, attack a city as soon as possible. The other player will not have had time to build his defences and may not have been as wise as you in

establishing his garrison.

I would recommend Arcadia to anyone who has not played a strategy type PBM game before. It is not unduly complicated to play but has a lot of the elements that go towards a good game - set turnrounds with few delays, lots of player contact, not too expensive, fast moving, well documented, and approachable game masters. It is entirely computer moderated though you get occasional messages from the GMs and they are always happy to answer any problems. Startup costs £5 and includes a comprehensive rulebook, a wall map and some stickers, future rounds are £1.50.

### Starting your own game

A lot of people have asked me for advice on how to start and run their own game. Most seem to have played one of the major fantasy games and feel that they can do just as well. So here are some tips for budding game masters, not from me but courtesy of some of the current giants.

1. Make absolutely sure that you have enough time to run the game. PBM games can be run on a part time basis but leave little time for anything else.

2. Spend a lot of time in designing the game. All your towns, non-player characters and scenarious should have as much depth as possible, for you can be sure that the players will soon find you out if you decide to make it up as you go along.

Try to think up some aspects that will make your game unique; why should anyone want to play a Saturnalia clone when they can have the original.

4. Get at least 20 experienced players to playtest the game for at least 15 rounds. They will find all the holes in the game that must be plugged before you can think of taking money from it, and you will begin to realise what you have let yourself in for.

5. Spend as much money as you can on designing and producing your startup package. A well printed, well illustrated rule book and good maps, tokens etc. will suggest to prospective players that this is a game that is worth a look.

6. Think very carefully how much to charge. Often you will achieve the best results if you are prepared to take a loss on the startup pack and the first few rounds. If the game is good enough you will start making money soon enough.

Seek advice from everyone you can. PBM is an incredibly friendly hobby and even the biggest names are always prepared to give the beginner a few tips.

I would not try to dissuade anyone from having a go at their own game but do not expect to become rich overnight. If you are looking to run the game parttime, limit the number of players to a figure that you can comfortably handle and if you see PBM as a career think very carefully first.



In a future issue I will be looking at the more difficult job of starting your own computer moderated game.

### PBM Convention

A last reminder that the Second British PBM Convention takes place as the Porchester Hall, Queensway London W2 on 7th February at 10.30 am. As well as the obvious attraction of the Computer Gamer stand, there will be PBM, RPG (advanced Dungeons and Dragons), wargame and computer game competitions, live role playing demonstrations as well as a chance to sample and talk about PBM. Admittance is £1.50 but the first ten Gamer readers who ring 01-801 0958 will receive two complimentary tickets if they can answer the following question - which game currently running in the UK has the largest number of players?

### News

There is not a lot of space for news this month but here are a few snippets:-

Jon Nicholson has released Super Vorcon the follow up to the highly successful Vorcon Wars. There will be a full Gamer review later in the year.

Two post holocaust games that are well worth a look at are The Hunting from DMC Games and Metro from Anarchy Unlimited. Both prove that it is possible to run a fantasy game without cribbing from Talkein. The Hunting costs £1.50 a round while Metro is only £1 and comes with a special Gamer offer of only 3 for the startup pack.

The excellent AEs (ay-us) which is my tip for the top in 1987, goes from strength to strength and now boasts arly 300 players. It is moderated by Legend Inc and feels more like taking part in a novel than playing a PBM game.

Pangea from Anvil Games is still in the playtest stage so if you would like to get in at the start of a brand new fantasy game why not drop them a line. They will be delighted to send you details and put you on the waiting list.

### Addresses

VORCON GAMES 59 Juniper Birch Hill, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 4ZG DMC GAMES 2 Pemerton Rd. Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 2LW ANARCHY UNLIMITED 30 Hazel St, Leicester LS2 7JN LEGEND INC. 38 Overton Dr. Chadwell Heath, Essex, RM6 4EA ANVIL GAMES 74 Aarons Hill, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 2LJ JADE GAMES PO Box 54, Southsea, Hants, PO4 0ND

all that was left inside was hope. Is there hope for Rainbird's latest box? When Pandora had opened the box

Rainbird's now familiar boxed games have to be exceptional to merit the rather high price they demand. It's alright giving superb boxes, novellas and playcharts but at the end of the day the game has to have something extra. Tracker is a good game but not a great game in the mould of The Prawn or Starglider and I felt that it will fail to succeed unless the price is cut considerably.

Set in Centrepoint, the malfunctioning leisure complex on Zeugma IV, the aim is to use several TRAC Skimmer craft to outwit the renegade central computer. The computer will defend itself by sending Cycloid robot ships to intercept and destroy any Skimmers under your control.

Centrepoint consists of 22 interlinked sectors which each have a complex network of trackways. Each sector is controlled by a communication centre which has to be destroyed to disrupt the central computer's control.

computer's control.

Initially you have three Skimmers under your control but this can be increased to eight. To guide one ship through the complex would be difficult enough but controlling several craft at once will put your mind into warp mode! Each ship needs individual attention when it reaches a junction, or node, of several

Title: Tracker

Computer: Commodore 64

Supplier: Rainbird

Price: £14.95 (cass); £17.95



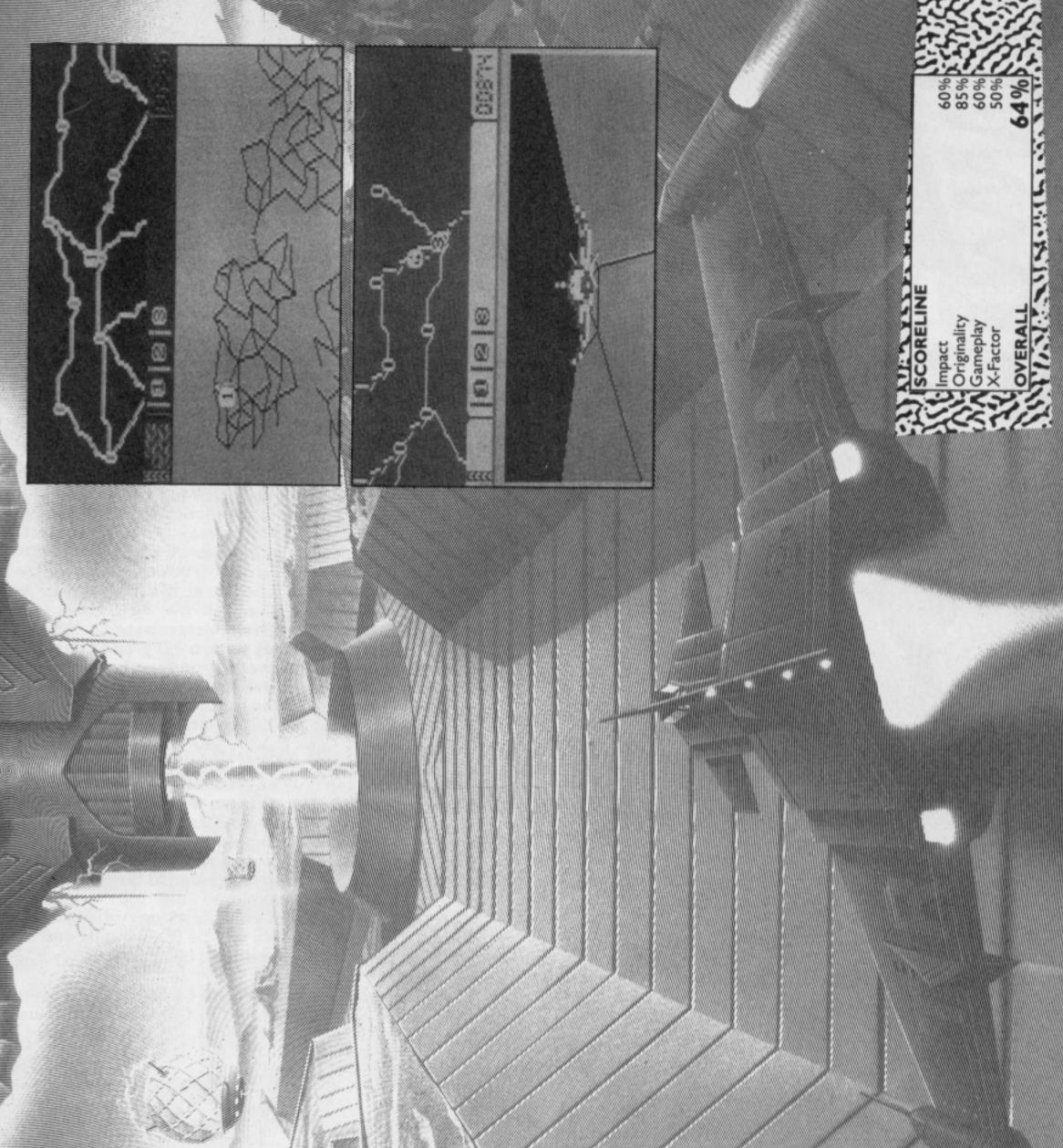
challenge from a Cycloid. Since the Cycloids far outnumber the Skimmer craft, these demands for individual attention increase as you penetrate deeper into the complex and the more cycloids you have, the more frequently you'll have to intercede.

Unattended vehicles can be placed into autopilot mode which means that they will continue in their present direction until a node is reached and then they will stop. One refinement of this mode is the ability to set a Skimmer on a non-stop course for the nearest communication centre by using a cross-hair cursor. On autopilot the Skimmer is at its most vulnerable and must be frequenly monitored to see that it isn't heading for a Cycloid.

directly controlled on a 3D action screen. This is essential when selecting a specific node exit or, principally, when a Cycloid has to be blasted out of existence. The top half of the screen which normally displays the map of the complex in one of four magnifications changes to show the view along the channel of a trackway. As you approach the attacking Cycloid, it springs into view and has to be eliminated with a shattering blast or two of your laser. If more than one of your Skimmers comes under attack at the same time you can guarantee that you will lose one so you must elect to protect the best places and leave any others to their fate.

Although Tacker is a complex piece of programming, I can't say that I was impressed with the gameplay. The strategy element is demanding but not as enjoyable as I initially imagined it would be. Not one of the best Rainbird games I've seen and a bit of a rip off at their

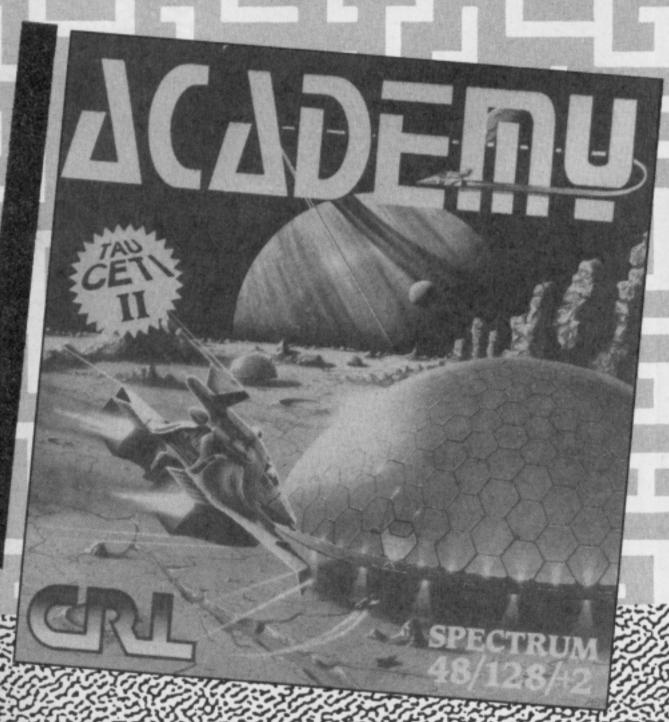
Oh, I haven't mentioned the novella. Probably just as well!



# SACADEMY

We have been monitoring your performance on Tau Ceti and it is obvious that you need practice.





that a few people should be offered the chance of a free place on the course. Aapplications are invited from those who think they can pass our initiative test. Only twenty places can be offered so do your best.

Academy is a development from the original Tau Ceti game. You can choose a mission, design a skimmer which will give you the best chance of success and then enter the simulator to see if you were right. The game features superb 3D graphics and an easy to use screen designer so you can place all of the readouts where you need them.

To win your copy of the game make as many words of three letters or more from the words:

## TAU CETI ACADEMY

Each letter can only be used once in each new word (so, for instance, you can use three letter 'A's, two letter 'E's, etc, but only one letter 'Y') and all the words you have found should be listed on a sheet of paper accompanied by your entry form. The number of words which you have found should also be written on the back of your envelope.

Twenty winners will receive a copy of Academy from CRL and in the case of a tie the winning entries will be drawn from the editor's hat (it's the only one big enough).

All entries should be received by February 28th and the results will be published in Gamer's April issue.

Academy	,			-																				•	G	ia	ın	n	e	r	F	e	b	r	ua	a
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### RULES

- The competition is open to all UK readers of Computer Gamer except employees of Argus Press Group, their printers, distributors or employees of CRL.
- All entries must be on the correct form photocopies are not allowed. Multiple entries are allowed, but each must be on the appropriate form.
- 3. Prizes will be awarded to the best entries judged by the editor.
- 4. The editor's decision is final.
- 5. The entry instructions form part of the rules.
- 6. All entries become the property of Computer Gamer.
- 7. All entries must reach us by February 28th, 1987.
- 8. The rules form the condition of entry.

# mEDitations

Welcome to the new look Gamer. The changes go deeper than what you see, it also affects what you'll be reading. Let's be honest, there are some games which are the great and worthy products of the best software houses in the world but there are others which are just

shows through. Games which should have been properly tested have been launched with the minimum of attention and there's more bugs around than ever. Even the wonderful Gauntlet isn't free from this criticism. We have found a bug or two in all

don't take so much bull from the Primadonna programmers, delicate little flowers that they are! When will we see Cyborg from CRL? When what sort of games are developed. Like the pop music business, the commercial aspects of the games industry are strangling originality. The Golden Age of the small, innovative software house is over and the era of the fast buck has arrived.

Not all is doom and gloom, companies like Firebird and Ariolasoft are will putting out original games. US Gold have a few gems on offer though I must say that their policy seems to lack the finesse with which they set the standards in their early days. Quantity rather than quality seems to be the order of the day.

Let's hope that the industry's resolution for 1987 was 'give the customer what he wants' rather than trying to please the bank manager. The software market has been declining over the past few years and I feel I must ask why.

If you have anything on this subject or anything relating to the computer market please write to Computer Gamer at I Golden Square, London WIR 3AB.

worthless and grate. We spare no-one. If it's naff, it's naff and you ought to know about it. Equally, if it's great you should know that too and we have initiated the Gamer Gold award to show it. If it gets the Gamer Gold then it's worth your hard-earned pennies.

Over the past few months we have seen the annual farce of the rush to get games out for the Christmas market. This period has been marked by the lateness of some of the games and the panic versions. None of them are serious and the game does deserve a Gold award but they should not be there.

It has been said that the home computer market is 'maturing', I think it's going mouldy with companies becoming more concerned with profit than product. Pull yourselves together, set realistic schedules and will the Commodore version of Startrek appear? OK Beyond, I realise that it's not all your fault and the ST version looks excellent but will we see the game in March or will it be delayed yet again?

The suffocating dominance of the chain stores is becoming more and more apparent. The way in which software is selected leaves some of the best games out in the cold and dictates





FRENCH CONTRACTOR CONT Trivial Pursuit -Title:

Young Player's Edition standing in your way.

Machine: C64

Supplier: Domark

Price: £14.95 (£8.95 as expansion pack)

If you thought that the original TP questions were just that little bit too hard, this could be just the thing that you were looking for. The Young Player's Edition is designed for anyone aged seven and older. Not that the questions are any easier, it is just that they have been restructured for a lower age group to give kids something of a fighting chance when playing against their parents.

The six categories are somewhat different from the original game. They now consist of People and Places, Art and Culture, Natural World, Science and Technology, Games and Hobbies, and Good Times. Questions tend to be on children's books, television programmes and pop records so that parents have a pretty good chance of being totally baffled. Indeed, at the recent Trivial Pursuit Computer Championships, the Journalists had a chance to play this version with the average mark being only seven out of ten.

Presentation of the game is exactly the same as the original computer version which is in turn the same as the board game with a few extra enhancements such as score charts. One excellent touch is that the package is available in two versions — game plus question tape or question only tape if you already own the first version. Expansion kits are being planned.

Trivia games on the computer are either very good or very bad. Fortunately, this falls into the former category and can be recommended to any youngster who loves filling their mind with totally trivial bits of information.

**G** Hamlett

Deep Strike Title: **Amstrad** Computer: Supplier: Durell £8.95 Price:

while ago, Durell flashed into the public eye with their highly successful game: Combat Lynx. This used an excellent new system for presenting 3D landscapes, based around contour lines, it

was very effective indeed.

3D landscapes have cropped up again in the latest game from Durell, but in a slightly different form. The game puts you in the seat of a Sopwith Camel escorting a flight of bombers out to destroy a Hun fuel dump. However, enemy planes and barrage balloons are

The screen is set out with you sitting on the bomber's tail and slightly below. Planes come at you and you can shoot at them, although this is quite awkward as the bomber is in the way. The ground is a fast(ish) moving gridded surface with the occasional surface feature to break the monotonous, flat, and yellow surface. Every now and again small buildings appear. Apparently you can bomb these, though the aiming system is a bit crude and I always missed.

Instruments comprise a damage indicator for you and the bomber, ammo and bomb levels, and a compass to guide you through the worst of the flak. There is no gunsight, you just have to aim by the trails of your tracer bullets.

There is a map to help you on your way that lets you see your position in

relation to the position of your main target. Once this is flattened, it is up to you to get the tattered remnants of your flight home for re-fueling.

The game has a nice look to it, and the crudity of the instruments makes it

very WWI-ish. However, the 3D effect of the ground never really works. The other 3D effects for the planes getting bigger as they approach is done in steps that are too big, giving the objects a jerky appearance. The gameplay is also a bit wierd due to your plane reacting very sluggishly compared to the enemy craft. This makes it a game that I am none too M Roberts keen on.

-
65% 80% 50% 30%
55%

Clubs are selected from the menu

shots. The direction and power of the

with the option of backspin on your iron

shot is then chosen in similar fashion and

you're on your way. When your ball has

landed, you are informed of the lie and

-175666 **Pro Golf** Title: Spectrum 5 Machine: **Atlantis** Supplier: £1.99 DA BARRAGA

no Golf is the second Spectrum golf simulation this month and despite being written in BASIC and being a fraction of the price of the Konami version, it is really a much better game.

Up to four people can play and there is a choice of two courses — Sunningdale and Pebble Beach. Each hole is presented as an overhead view with a small inset showing the golfer actually swinging the club. There are various playing options including choice of tee and practice. You can set the wind or ground conditions or let the computer throw out random factors on each hole.

**(3)** ∞ ⊛ (3)

the type of ground that you have managed to hit. Depending on the hazard, you may find that your next shot is only playable with certain clubs and that there is a reduction in the maximum power available to you. Also there is a random variation in the direction that your next shot goes. For example, if you have a bad lie in heavy rough, you can only use a 5-10 iron with a 48% reduction in

distance and a 20 degree random variation in chosen direction. All these figures are tabulated in the instructions.

As you actually make the shot, your little man swings his club and you have to time the shot correctly otherwise you will hook or slice the ball, usually with disastrous effects. Once on the green, you have to allow for the direction and degree of slope as you play your shot. More importantly, you have to be very careful in determining the power of the stroke. You can adjust the power from zero to as much as you like. When you hit the ball, this power value decreases and must be less than twelve when the ball reaches the hole. Again, timing is crucial. Too early and you lose power,

SCORELINE 50% Originality Impact X-Factor Value

Title: Silicon Dreams
Machine: C64
Supplier: Rainbird
Price: £14.95

ascience fiction follow up to the fantasy based Jewels of Darkness, Silicon Dreams is a trilogy of previously released Level 9 adventures. The games have all be reworked to take advantage of the latest parser and compression techniques and, in the case of Snowball, graphics have been added for the first time.

In Snowball, you play the part of agent Kim Kimberley. Awoken early from your hibernation, you are aware that something is wrong, but have no idea what. Discovering how the colour coded control panels work is your first task as you try to avoid the sinister nightingales and save the space ship.

This you manage to do but the powers that be get hold of the wrong end of the stick and accuse you of trying to sabotage the ship and sentence you to death.

In Return to Eden, you manage to land on the planet — the first human to do so and must try to find a way into the city of Enoch. At the same time, you must also give your pursuers the slip as they try to bring you to justice as they see it.

Coming to terms with life in Enoch is the main problem in the Worm in Paradise. It has a strange political system with a thriving market in selling bits of your body to people wishing to become immortal, no taxes but an instant system SIEICON DREAMS

of fines for the slightest misdemeanour. Oh, there might also be a chance to save the world as well!

The parser is of a high quality and understands such phrases as 'get all except the laser' and 'take the box and open it'. You can temporarily save your position to RAM and, should you make a fatal mistake, the OOPS command lets you go back a step.

The three games come complete with comprehensive instructions and a forty

Winter Wonderland

C64 and Amstrad

odd page novella. This package is a treat for adventurers everywhere.

**G** Hamlett

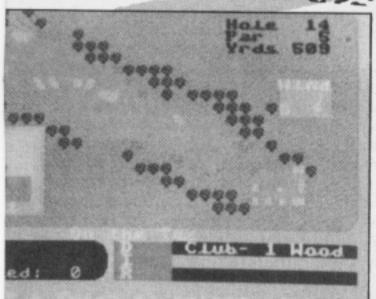
SCORELINE	
Originality	80%
Impact	85%
X-Factor	85%
Value	90%
OVERALL	85%
- 10 TO 17 - 17 20 TO 18	311:22

too late and you hit the ball harder than you intended.

Although the presentation of Pro Golf is nothing stupendous, it is perfectly adequate. Where the game scores over Konami's Golf though is that it creates a much better feel for the game — it is far more realistic. Complete a round here in under par and you really will have achieved something.

G Hamlett

SCORELINE	C.P. A. P. A.
Originality	40%
Impact	50%
Playability	80%
X-Factor	80%
OVERALL	65%



Supplier: Incentive
Price: £7.95

Acouple of years ago, a utility called the Quill took the adventure world by storm. It allowed anybody to write an adventure for themselves, even if they had little experience of programming. Then a rival arrived. The

programming. Then a rival arrived. The Graphic Adventure Creator has been receiving rave reviews throughout the computer press. Winter Wonderland is one of the first games to be commercially released using the new

ystem.

:Title:

Machine:

You have been an anthropologist for some ten years now but that one discovery that will make your name has always eluded you. Just as you are on the verge of throwing the whole thing in, you receive a telex from an old Russian friend who is currently working in Tibet where he claims to have found something extraordinary.

Quickly booking a flight, you land in Tibet and hire a light aircraft to take you to the site. Unfortunately, you don't pay enough heed to the Tibetan equivalent of lan McCaskell and your plane crashes in the Himalayas. Your only possible help as you prepare to hit the ground is that you

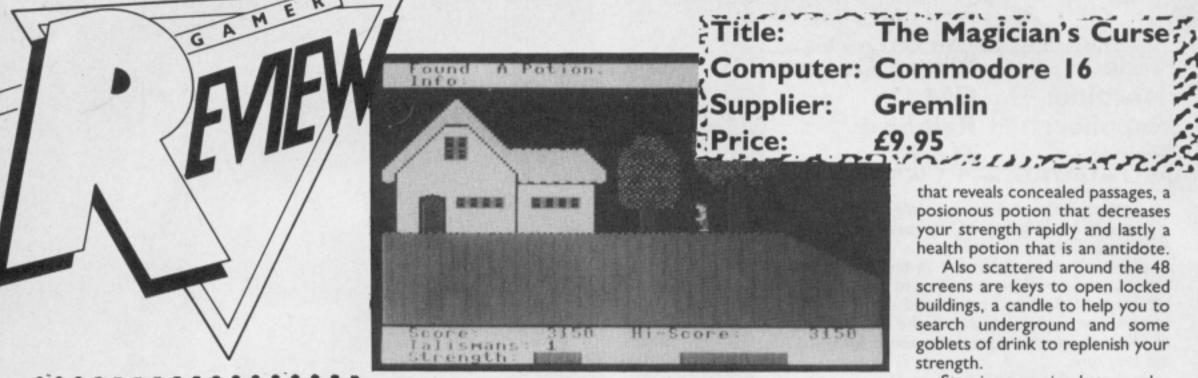
see the sun glinting off a building somewhere in the distance.

The land in question does in fact prove to be Shangri La — a people who were supposed to have developed at the same rate as, but independently of, ourselves. In practice, this just means that the city is a Himalayan version of Milton Keynes, complete with huge shopping centre and a fixation with ski lifts.

The best thing that can be said about this game is that it is poor. This is nothing to do with GAC although I think it will be some time before it is seen to its best effect. It's just that the storyline is weak with no real atmosphere created within the game. It is also overpriced and would have made an average budget game. Leave well alone.

**G** Hamlett

SCORELINE	THE PERSON NAMED IN
Originality	40%
Impact	40%
X-Factor	30%
Value	30%
OVERALL	35%



Title: Aardvark •

Computer: C16

Supplier: Bug-Byte

Price: £2.99

> ontrolling a long, wet, sticky tongue may not sound like a particularly pleasant task, but it is one that has contributed to a very good game in Aardvark.

> Finding himself situated on the top of an ant burrow, Aardy Aardvark has given you control of his enormous tongue in the hope that you can satisfy his mounting hunger by consuming a selection of ant eggs. The eggs themselves are scattered in a maze and lurking amongst them are several other bug forms, few of which enjoy making contact with the pulsating red tip of Aardy's tongue. Things like ants, super ants, queen ants, worms and caterpillars all pose various problems as you try to consume the eggs.

On either side of the screen are several exits from where the

bugs appear and the problems arise when your tongue's at the bottom of the maze and the bugs are at the top. The bugs kill Aardy when they touch any part of his tongue, except the tip, so you have to be quick to withdraw it in order to eat them.

The worms are a particularly annoying breed because they can only be eaten tail first and avoiding them head-on can seem, at times, to be a virtual impossi-

Aardvark is certainly a difficult game but one that continually held my interest. There are over 1,000 maze combinations and 16 levels to complete, all with a good standard of graphics. This is a game that will keep many C16 game players occupied for a while.

Stuart Kirkham

aving established yourself as one of the best treasure hunters in the business, you are chosen to explore a strange uninhabited land that no ordinary mortal would dare enter. Rumour has it that an evil magician once ruled there and left behind a priceless golden statue and other treasures that would make a welcome addition to your collection.

The land into which you must venture is divided into 48 screens. To get to the statue you have to collect seven talismen located in [ - - different areas but there are also certain other objects that must be located to reach the final screen.

Firstly there are three different potions, all identical in appearance but each serving a very different purpose. There is a magic potion

that reveals concealed passages, a posionous potion that decreases your strength rapidly and lastly a health potion that is an antidote.

Also scattered around the 48 screens are keys to open locked buildings, a candle to help you to search underground and some goblets of drink to replenish your

strength.

Starving vampire bats, apples falling from trees, water and a series of forcefields all stand in your way in this challenging game. A satisfactory standard of graphics and sound combined with eight skill levels of enjoyable gameplay make The Magician's Curse a very worthwhile buy.

Stuart Kirkham

OVERALL	64%
X-Factor	75%
Gameplay	75% 1
Originality	40%
Impact	60%
CSCORELINE	

SCORELINE (Impact Originality Gameplay X-Factor

his is the latest game from Rainbird that features the 3D wire graphics that made Firebird's Elite so popular. It was also the game that Atari ST owners were so excited about until they actually started playing the game. The 128K Spectrum version improved (honestly) on the Atari original with a real purpose to the game with missions and things to

do. The Amstrad version is a come pletely different game again, with Starglider I, this is the command a slightly different missions system and much better graphics.

To those who haven't seen the other versions of the game, here 80% is a quick resumé: the peaceful planet of Novenia has been attacked by the warlike Egron's in huge bird-shaped spaceships built to mimic the natural space-going Starglider birds on their migration through the Novenian star system. These spaceships managed to slip through the orbital net of Sentinel space stations guarding the planet.

Soon the planet is under Egron rule and the only defending ship left intact is a museum piece on Novenia's moon. You fly this ship and have to save the planet singlehanded. The game is very Elite-ish, even down to some of the attacking ships that have a very familiar shape to Elite craft. The main difference is that Starglider is fought out on the ground. Tanks, transporters, rocket launchers (of various types) all sit around or drive around on the surface. Also on the surfaces are bunkers to rearm and regenerate your shields, and power towers that you have to fly between to refuel.

For weaponry you have the usual lasers and a maximum of two camera-guided missiles. Armed with all this you then have to start playing the game.

The main aim is to destroy ship of the invasion fleet and needs a couple of missiles in its weak point (its rear end) for it to be destroyed. Other than that you just go blasting around until you build up the required amount to earn yourself a mission.

These missions relieve the tedium of the game as they give you something to go for. Usually an extra item of equipment like a super missile or a rear view scanner. These are the only two items of equipment that I have found so far, though the section on the cockpit display for indicating which items of special equipment are present can show more than two perhaps items such as the energy unit present in the 128K Spectrum are provided.

Picking up energy is one of the harder things to do, as a power tower transmitter is made out of three towers formed into a pair at one end and single pylon at the other. Between the single pylon and the pair, power is transmitted along subterranean cabling and can be picked up by skimming along the ground between the pair of pylons and towards the single pylon. Your energy then gets recharged. However, this can be rather difficult when there are walkers and stompers (they do exactly what they sound as if they

Starglider Computer: Amstrad Rainbird £14.95

Computer: CI6

Supplier: Melbourne Houses

£7.95 Price: CONTRACTOR WAS INTO THE

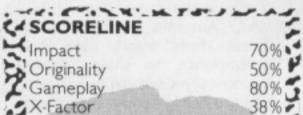
At long last, The Way Of The Exploding Fist has finally reached Cl6 owners. However for those of you expecting something as addictive as the other versions then prepare to be a little disappointed.

The major problem with this game is the infuriating movement restriction that prevents you from doing moves such as the flying kick to the head or the forward and backward somersault. When playing SCORELINE in the one player mode it can become particularly frustrating. Having reached 5th Dan Status the next computer opponent is, it seems, twice as fast and almost impossible to beat without the help

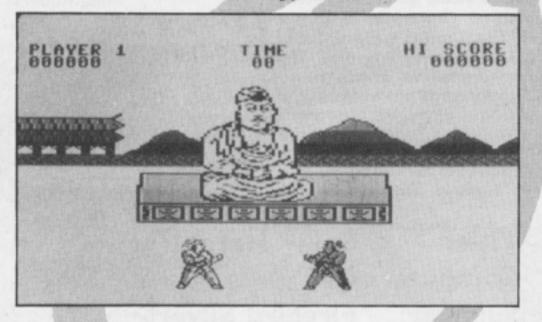
of the somersault, kick, etc ... so the game becomes increasingly

Apart from this great irritation it is a good adaptation of the game with nice graphics and a very good joystick response.

Stuart Kirkham



X-Factor 60% OVERALL



ou may have seen a sample version of this game, given away on the cover of our companion BBC title A&B Computing. If not, then may I suggest that you do, and quickly?

Computer: BBC

\*Title:

Price:

Supplier:

Xor

Logotron

Logotron are well known for their Logo series of programs (now accepted as the standard by Acorn in the Compact) and for the support that they give to their software. Now, in a radical new

move, they are attempting to give that same level of support to a game - but what a game!

Basically, Xor is a series of mazes which you must clear of masks, using shields as your playing pieces, in a certain number of moves. Ho hum. However, the game is so expertly programmed and so filled with humour and style that it becomes instantly compulsive.

The graphics are excellent and the puzzles fiendish - one level, for instance, has masks which turn the lights out leaving you with a dark screen and the problem of finding the mask that will switch them on again.

Lively touches abound too. On later screens there are fish which fall if unsupported and chickens which fly across the screen when disturbed! Nothing is simple either. The mazes and puzzles will intrigue and fascinate you and if, like me, you're a fan of the Repton series, then this will also appeal to you.

In the future Logotron are to release a maze generator, a special school edition and a collection of the best games players' maps support, as I said.

It may be unusual, it may not involve killing aliens, but do buy this one. You will not regret it!

	Dave Reeder
SCORELINE	is waing
	80%
Impact Originality	80%
Gameplay	90%
-X-Factor	90%
OVERALL	85%

do) marching all over the place, shooting at you and stamping on . Title: you.

N. VINE

quite quick. Colour has been added to a certain extent and this is especially effective when the selfpropelled gun is tracking towards you in glorious close-up. The graphics are also fairly fast and have none of the flicker that you might expect. The design of the objects is also very good, the Starglider drones (though not Starglider 1) look most impressive flapping around.

The game comes with the now obligatory 64 page Rainbird novella. On this occasion it is a reasonable work that you really must read in order to work out what you are trying to do in the game. The instruction book is much smaller at a mere 15 pages, but it packs in all the necessary information that you might want, thought it is a bit over-verbose at times and it can be difficult to pick out the wheat from the chaff.

A good looking game with a high perceived value, though it goes get boring after a while as

there is so little depth to the play. Mike Roberts

. . . . SCORELINE • Impact 85% Originality Gameplay 55%1 35%1 X-Factor OVERALL

**Five Star Games** The graphics are very good and Computer: BBC Supplier: Beau Jolly Price: ーインナインストイントーノイ

> he computer business bepromotion budgets and, increasingly, exploitation of the back catalogue. Beau Jolly is a bit like K-Tel: grab the rights to some hits, repackage them for maximum appeal and count the profits.

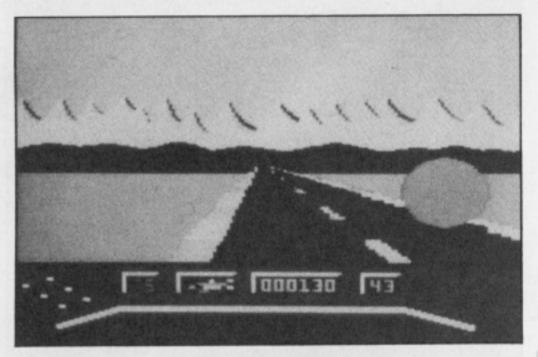
Not a bad scheme at all, especially when the package is as strong as this one. For just under a tenner you can pick up Geoff Capes-Strong Man, Deathstar, Twin Kingdom Valley, Repton and Combat Lynx. The real question is, I suppose, just how many of these you have have in your collection already? However, the cost is only just greater than one ordinary game so you can be quickly in profit yourself!

There are certainly three comes more like the music classics here: the excellent arcade business with every month puzzler Repton (and if you've never that goes by - stars, charts, seen this or one of its two sequels, then you've missed a real treat), the shoot-em-up Deathstar and the flight and warfare simulator Combat Lynx. These, I think, should all be in your collection.

The other pair are weaker: the Geoff Capes game does not inspire me at all and, although it is rumoured to be a classic, the graphic adventure Twin Valley Kingdom I find tiresome. However, this is an excellent collection, bound to please a great many BBC owners. I just wish the choice could have been a little more imaginative and adventurous . . .

Dave Reeder

SCORELINE	E 74311
/ Impact	60%
<b>≰</b> Originality	70%
Gameplay	70%
X-Factor	70%
OVERALL	68%



le: Elektraglide Computer: Amstrad Supplier: English Software Price:

his phenomenally fantastic, futuristic road-race game, previously only available to Atari and Commodore owners, is now out on the humble Amstrad. The idea of the game is to drive your car across alien looking landscapes. 3D objects block your path like floating prisms hanging over the road

and zig-zagging, bouncing balls shoot down the road towards you. All this is supplemented with enemy aircraft dropping sinister glowing pillars in your way.

The road is strictly in the standard mould with the 3D, dead flat road stretching away in front of you to a horizon replete with the 'traditional' mountains. Alongside the road, trees appear occassionally and every now and then a tunnel looms up on the horizon and you flash towards it. This heralds the next stage of the run.

The game proceeds section by section with a time limit on each run, any time left over from one section is carried over to the next. The original game had no score it's not whether you win or lose, but how you play the game - but, like the Commodore 64 version, the Amstrad variant has a score related to time and distance.

There are three different tracks in the game. Named England, Australia, and America. These three tracks bear little resemblance to their adopted countries (mountains in England?) and are just different tracks with different colour schemes. Each one is about five sections long so you should spend a lot of time with this game.

The Amstrad implementation has taken a very long time. The original game was written around the very special processing abilities; of the Commodore and Atari video chips, along with the relative high speed of the 6502 processor compared to the Z80 processor in the Amstrad. The result is a lot

better than it could have been. The road moves very quickly, but the movement of various objects can be a bit slow and jerky, though this only really shows up when approaching or leaving a tunnel. The Amstrad's good colour ability is used to its full effect and the whole thing looks very attractive.

Whilst you are thrashing around all these roads there is some really incredible music playing away in the background. I admit that it isn't as good as the Commodore 64 and the Atari versions, due to the limitations of the Amstrad's fairly crude sound system, but it is still excellent real scene setting stuff . . .

On the whole, this is an extremely enjoyable game that is one of the few that I will keep coming back to over the next year. Play it and believe it!

Mike Roberts

SCORELINE	
Impact	90%
Originality	85%
Gameplay	90%
X-Factor	95%
OVERALL	90%

Computer: BBC Martech Supplier:

> n a year that has already produced two excellent and classic shoot-em-ups (Galaforce and Psycastria), BBC owners gain an extra treat with this superb space game. I'm not sure if this is a direct conversion from another machine but, even if it is, it is a gem!

> A small vertical window holds a very smoothly scrolling vertical planet surface. Your ship can move in all four directions but, obviously, you must move deeper and deeper into the game and get past the surface to the enemy's installations.

All the while, of course, you are 2 Supplier: being buzzed by wave after wave Tof aliens and having to dodge & Price: certain buildings on the surface. A bit like a cross between Uridium and Galaforce, I suppose.

The graphics are amongst the best I can recall for the machine, the sound effects involving and the game play compulsive. It is perhaps the nearest game so far on the Beeb that captures the style and excitement of playing in the arcades. Well done, programmer Michael Archer - more please!

Well done, too, to Martech who usually embarrass us with real turkeys like the Sam Fox Strip Poker game. This has to be one of my nominations for BBC Game of the Year!

Dave Reeder

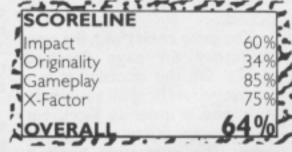
Spiky Harold Title: Computer: CI6 Firebird Silver

The object of this game is to gather enough food for Harold the hedgehog to live on during hibernation. The essential items are scattered on and below a large hedgerow whose other inhabitants would rather see our spiny-backed hero starve to death. Amongst the many items to be collected are coins that give extra lives, glasses of wine that reverse Harold's directions, apples and other such delicacies but unfortunately all the items are protected by wasps, rodents, sulphur clouds, bouncing balls and other devices.

All the items have to be collected within the 24 hours displayed on the clock at the bottom of the

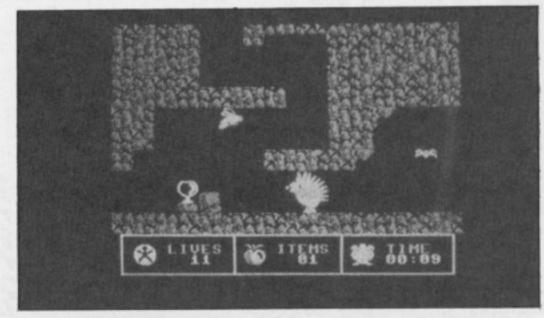
screen. If you manage to gather all of the items in the allotted time, then you must return Harold to his pad where he can sleep the winter

Spiky Harold is a good platform game and has plenty of entertainment to offer for such a small price. Stuart Kirkham





SCORELINE	100
Impact	90%
Originality	85%
Gameplay	90%
X-Factor	95%
OVERALL	90%





# Amaze our friends with a screen designed by you in the forthcoming addition to Gauntlet.

ur featured game this month is Gauntlet and we are proud to offer 20 copies of the game to the most sneaky, fiendish and cunning readers. To show that you're nasty enough to deserve a prize you must prove it by sending a map for a new level of the Gauntlet dungeon. The craftiest design will be forwarded to US Gold for inclusion in the forthcoming Deeper Dungeons expansion set as the official Gamer screen.

US Gold are also offering the outright winner a plaque commemorating the achievement and an offical Gauntlet multi-coloured T-shirt.

To help you design your own dungeon we include a map of Level 4 of the official US Gold game and a key to the generators, treasure and other features found in the game. Draw your design neatly on

squared paper to the same dimensions as our example. Please attach your entry form firmly to the back of the drawing and send it to

### Gauntlet, Computer Gamer, ASP Ltd, I Golden Square, LONDON WIR 3AB.

All entries must reach us by February 20th, 1987.

We regret that we cannot return any maps unless you enclose a stamped, addressed envelope with your entry and write SAE clearly on the back of your envelope. The map selected as the Gamer map will not be returnable but the designer will receive a free copy of Deeper Dungeons, as well as the original Gauntlet game, the commemorative plaque and T-shirt.

Symbols which may be used in your design:

Sorcerer, Weak:

(ring as appropriate)

	Floor	blank	Destructable Food:	DF
	Wall:	**	Non-Destructable Food:	NF
	Destructable Wall:	*3	Poisoned Food:	PF
	Trap Wall:	*T	Destructable Potion:	DB
	Horizontal Door:		Non-Destructable Potion:	NB
	Vertical Door:	::	Invisible Amulet:	IN
	Start:	ST	Key:	KY
	Exit	EI	Trap:	TP
	Treasure:	SS	Transporter:	TR
	GHOSTS:		GRUNTS:	
1	Ghost, Strong:	G3	Grunts, Strong	R3
	Ghost, Medium:	G2	Grungs, Medium:	R2
1	Ghost, Weak:	G3	Grunts, Weak:	RI
ĺ	Generator, Strong (coffin):	C3	Generator, Strong (liar):	L3
	Generator, Medium (coffin		Generator, Medium (liar)	L2
	Generator, Weak (coffin):	CI	Generator, Weak (liar)	LI
3	DEMONS:		LOBBERS:	
	Demon, Strong:	D3	Lobbers, Strong:	<b>B3</b>
١	Demon, Medium:	D2	Lobbers, Medium:	B2
1	Demon: Weak:	DI	Lobbers, Weak:	BI
	Generator, Strong: (hole):	H3	Generator, Strong	N3
	Generator, Medium (hole):	H2	Generator, Medium:	N2
0	Generator, Weak (hole)	HL	Generator, Weak:	NI
,,,	A PROCESSION	SORCE	RERS:	
1	Sorcerer, Strong:	Z3	Generator, Medium (castle):	T2
1	Sorcerer Medium	72	Generator, Weak (castle):	TI

Mr. Death:

Use the symbols sparingly, you don't have to use all of them.

Generator, Strong (castle):

A 7 /	////
Gauntlet	Gamer February
NAME:	
ADDRESS:	
I agree to abide by the rules of the	
Signed:	
Computer owned: Spec/Ams/C64	



With our brand new look we have decided on a radically new marking system. We believe this to be the definitive system of software evaluation but an explanation of the categories will clarify the finer points of the scheme

The Scoreline is the reviewer's considered opinion of the success with which the program entertains and this is reflected in the Overall percentage derived from the four categories.

IMPACT relates to the audiovisual appeal of arcade style games but equally evaluates the atmosphere created by a text-only adventure. It ncludes all of the elements of the game from sound and graphics to the quality of the packaging.

Some games require very little by way of explanation but other games may necessitate a weighty tome of instructions. Woe betide the simple game which overdoses on bumph or the complex one which skimps on textual detail.

ORIGINALITY is a rare commodity these days but even old ideas can be given a new angle to refresh the cerebral pleasure cells. The umpteenth version of 2D Pacman can expect rough treatment here but the shoot-em-up deluxe will

GAMEPLAY is an essential quality of a game, if you need the dexterity of an octopus coupled with the brain of an Einstein then the playability factor will be low. Using the Q key for pause and the P key for quit will be similarly penalised. On the other hand, key redefinition and joystick rationalisation will boost the value here. Slow response or over eager control will similarly suffer.

X-FACTOR is a little more difficult to comprehend. Some games may have gross graphics, soporific sound, zero originality and be virtually impossible to play but still possess a certain addictiveness. Other games may score highly in most categories but have a serious bug, loading problem or may just be in extreme bad taste. The X-Factor gives the reviewer the facility to express an aversion to sickly coloured cassettes, permit a hangover allowance or an adjustment for any other aspect of enjoyment not covered by the other three categories. In short, it's a fun factor.

We now have two types of award: the Gamer Gold and the Bane of the Month.

Gamer Golds will be awarded to those games which reach a sufficiently high overall score but the award will be weighted towards the Impact, Originality and Gameplay categories.

At Gamer we've noted certain other magazines which set a cut-off mark of 90% for an award. Games are often awarded 89% and just fail to receive their deserved accolade, any reviewer who can show me a 1% difference between two games can have my job tomorrow. In program assessment, percentages are arbitrary, comparitive values NOT statistical values. It's just a simple means of saying that this is a mark on a scale of a hundred, the actual value is a reviewer's estimate. Our awards are made with this in mind.

The Bane of the Month is not necessarily the worst game, in fact, it may be potentially worthy of a Gamer Gold! A seriously flawed masterpiece is as much a candidate as the type of game in which the loading is the most exciting part. So it's not always a Duffer but certainly the kind of game which gets you reaching for a crucifix to hold it at

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The game is set in New York City in the late 1990's. You role-play the part of a gangleader who controls a group of misguided youths. The city has severely deteriorated. The brave citizens who remain are now in a life and death struggle with the ever increasing number of drug-crazed street gangs. The New York Police Department is severely undermanned.

Your main goal is to become a very powerful gang. This is measured by building your gangs turf into one of the largest and by becoming one of the richest, toughest, and most notorious gangs in the city. This will allow you to enter the MOB, and maybe later, become the Godfather.

On a typical turn you could send your Pros, Punks and 'Cruits out to take over a couple of city blocks and ambush an enemy gang, rob or firebomb a building, buy and sell drugs, have yourselves a party, terrorize the residents, and much more.

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Each player is either a king of a fantasy race or a powerful charismatic character. You can recruit trolls, wildmen and control powerful creatures such as dragons. Your characters will capture and control cities, upon which you can spend gold to improve security, workshop production, defences, and maintain and enlarge your army. With gold, your wizards undertake magical research. Spies search out enemy strongholds and then attempt acts of sabotage, theft and assassination. These are just a few options available to a player in Earthwood.
Earthwood is computer moderated but the turn sheets and replies

are written in plain English.

No need to look through complex charts and code books to understand this game.





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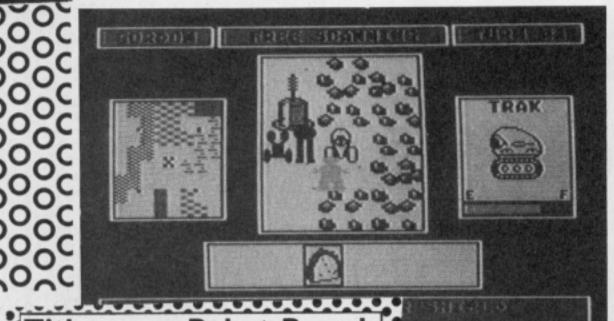


# ROBOT RASCALS

Ariolasoft's robot recoveries package combines the best features of a board game with the power of a computer.



0000000000



**Robot Rascals** Title: Computer: C64

Supplier: **Ariolasoft** 

Price: £16.95 (disk)



ell, it had to happen, I suppose. Computer games have been threatening to incorporate board games for some time now, and the Domark brothers brought the two unnervingly close in recent months. Enter Ariolasoft/Electronic Arts (last heard of on Marble Madness) with one of the strangest games of the past year, and potentially one of the most enjoyable.

Basically, this is a treasure hunt game with lots of frills. The screen is split into 3 main windows: one showing the whole map, one a localised area, and one depicting your particular robot character. There is also a text window for information on your progress and a rather useless colour bar just in case you couldn't tell by shape and name alone which icon was yours. The object of the game is to find a variety of items (there are 24 in all) and return them to the start point of the game — the first one to do so declares it (the computer will take your word for it) and that's that. There are two things that determine the objects you search for; the Item Cards and the

that's that. There are two things that determine the objects you search for; the Item Cards and the Luck Cards — you will find a pile of each in the box and you leave them face down on the table for all the players to take one when instructed.

The item cards have one object pictured on each. Basically you should be searching for the objects you hold, and you may hold 4 Item cards at one time. The Luck cards give you instructions as to what should be done with your current hand of Item cards, and this does not take into account which objects you may already have found. Thus you may have already

retrieved an object when you are instructed to give away that particular Item card — in this situation you may either hide the object making it hard for the player who holds the card, hope that the card comes back to you, or hang onto the object and force a confrontation at a later stage. The Luck cards may instruct you to change, swap or discard any or all of your Item cards and obviously this gets more absorbing the more players are taking part. In no time at all the frustration

involved in this part of the game far exceeds the enjoyment to be derived from the rest of it, and leads me to believe that Robot Rascals is probably a lot more fun at a party than hunched around your average domestic TV.

You may pick one of 10 robots to be your player in the game. In effect your choice makes no difference as they all trundle about in the same way, with no noticeable features or distinctive properties. On screen they move in a particular way, but this is the height of their idiosyncracy, and I think EA missed out here on the chance for some fun role-playing. Anyway, once picked, you can muck around with the energy levels to give you a fair or unfair handicap relative to other players, and start the game. You pick your 4 Item cards and set off (using the joystick) across the on-screen terrain until the energy for that move runs out.

You don't have to exhaust all your energy, indeed it is better not to, but some types of landscape take it out of you more than others. To help you there are teleports dotted around the island, and your robot also has the power to scan for any particular object.

When scanning, your on-screen character rotates until he detects the object, stopping and indicating the direction you should proceed in. The faster he rotates, the closer you are - and if you are close enough to pick it up it will be automatically retrieved for you. Both scanning and teleporting, however, cost energy, and if you want to defend your droid against attack from another player it is best to save enough energy to construct shields. Whenever you terminate your go, the computer instructs the next player to take his turn.

At the start of each move, a global condition is set by the computer which governs all players this covers everything from 'Free Scanning' to 'More Energy' and whether you'll like this game - I may help or hinder all players on know you will - but whether the equal terms. When everyone has made their move the computer picks a new global event and the cycle starts again. It also picks some short and cute ditties to announce major events in the game (I especially liked Home Sweet Home when you reach base) and keeps tally on which objects are owned by which player (but not which Item cards).

From this review, and from playing the game at any length, you accept something else in its place, will find that Robot Rascals is a highly entertaining and unusual ex- it deserves. perience. Not only are there several game variations for advanced players, involving 'wild' cards, but the tactics in outmanoeuvering your opponents would not seem out of place in Poker or Whist. On screen you may actually crash into any opponent, steal his objects, and throw them in the nearest river (thus making it virtually impossible

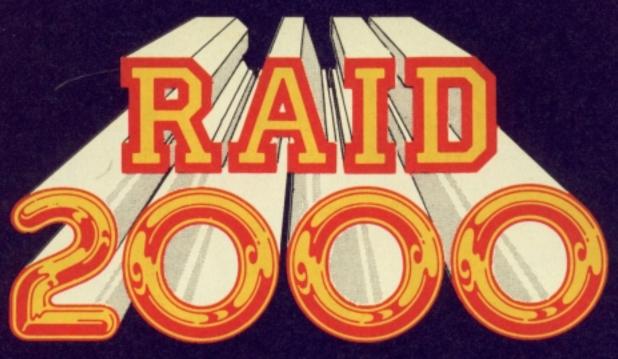
for him to reach them) - that's how dirty this game gets! Conserving energy, and keeping secret your hand of Item cards soon become the only way to stay ahead of your rivals, and the instructions help you considerably with alternative strategies and tactics.

On the minus side, I felt EA missed out on several chances to make this a real classic - the graphics, while cute, are really not up to scratch, the speed of play is often too slow, and the playing area is probably too small by half. That having been said, I'm sure Robot Rascals gives us a glimpse of how computer games might develop when we've had our share of shoot-em-ups.

The big question is not shops will stock it. Major retailers like Boots are getting increasingly boring in the choice of games they sell, often caring more about the shape of their shelves than the products they actually keep on them, and I really can't see a square box like this being ordered in large numbers alongside the boringly standard double-cassette cases. If you can take the trouble to seek this game out rather than it may actually receive the success

Ariolasoft inform me that the packaging is now a more conventional disk pack - Ed.

	w.w
SCORELINE	
Impact	60%
Originality	95%
Gameplay	95%
X-Factor	90%
OVERALL	85%



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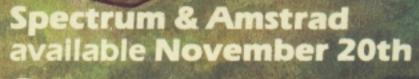




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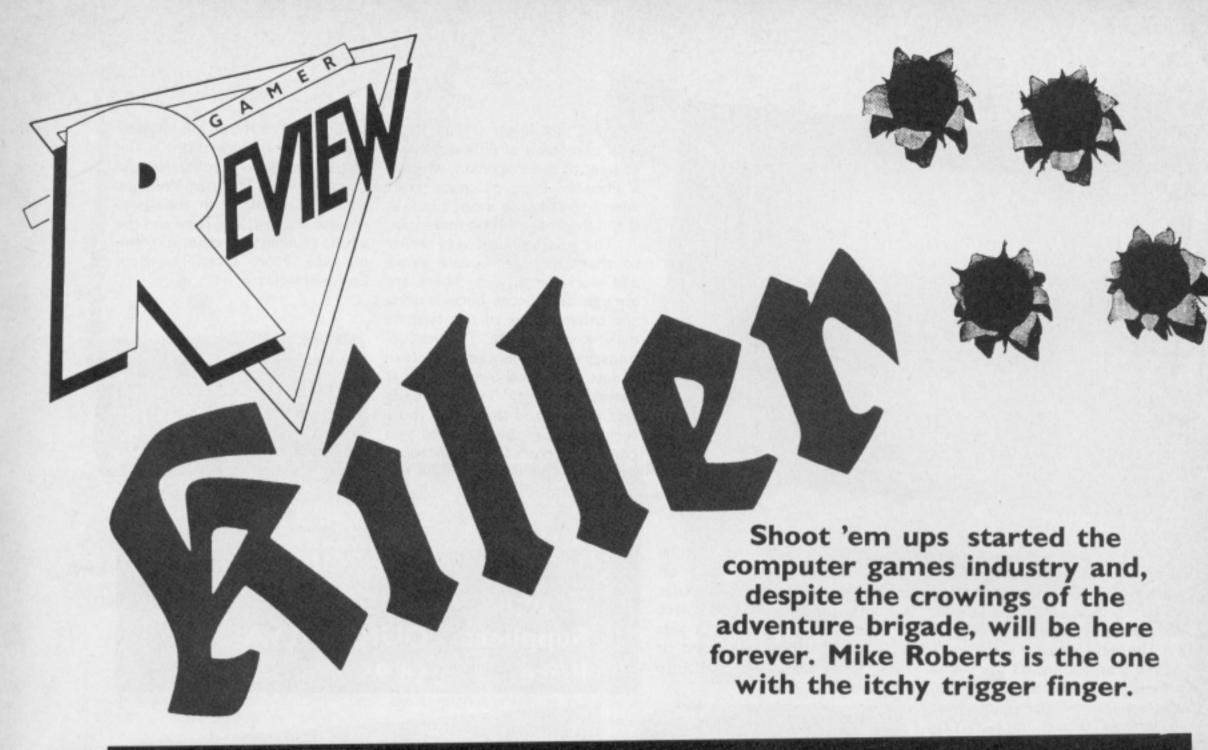
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LEGEND OF KAGE



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confess that I am a real zappem fiend. I really enjoy the challenge of a good shoot 'em up (what a clumsy phrase). The amount of thought that has to go into out-thinking the 'intelligence' of whatever it is that is out to get you is really exhilerating.

The blinkered adventure and strategy fans always dismiss these types of games as being 'brainless' and requiring no thought. This is usually an attempt to cover up their inability to play these, the most challenging type of game

ever invented. How can anybody extol the virtues of spending hours (or even days) slowly solving a puzzle that in real life would have to be solved in minutes or seconds. In zappem games, you still have puzzles, you still have problems, you still have to out psyche the author of the game, and the puzzles and problems are (in their own way) every bit as difficult as an adventure game. The big difference is that shoot 'em up games are in 'real time'.

You have to bomb a certain

number of ground targets, avoid others, and pick up some other objects. And shoot various ships, ram some sort of craft, and dock with others. All this whilst watching your height, speed, fuel, ammo level, and swapping between different types of weaponry. All this is done at breakneck speed weaving in and out amongst buildings. And, of course, shooting you full of holes at the along with one or two real classics. same time.

I'm not describing any game in

particular, its just a generalisation, but most shoot 'em ups have this number of things to think about. Some, like Trap by Tony Crowther, have even more to worry about. As you can see a great deal more thought has to be applied than the 'thinking games' (ho, ho!) parents/computer teachers would have you believe

Here's a selection of shoot 'em everybody and his brother are ups that have come out recently

## Title: '43 — ONE YEAR AFTER Computer: COMMODORE 64 Supplier: ACTION Price: £9.95

the Swedish software house Action (or more properly American Action) and written by Greve Graphics.

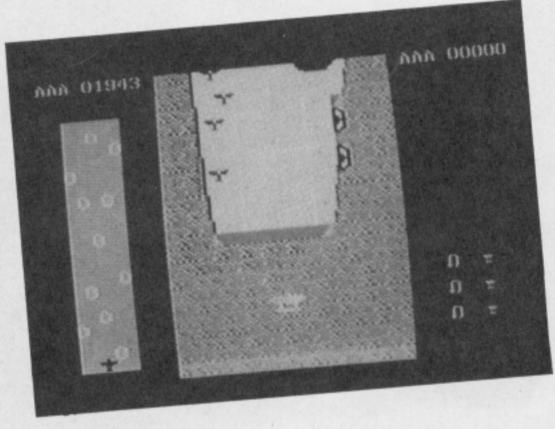
joystick of a P-38 fighter bomber during the American Pacific War. You fly from aircraft carrier to aircraft carrier, and fly over small pacific atols shooting as many Japanese planes as possible. Occasionally a large bomber will appear and you can kill that with multiple shots. As well as three planes you have three loops per level, this is for use in dire emergency, hitting space makes you loop high into the air, thus avoiding your attackers for a short while.

you will have guessed by now, '43

This is one of the first games from is a close imitation of 1942. The Capcom coin-op shoot 'em up that came out in its official guise from Elite Software a few months ago. The 'official' game was extremely The game puts you behind the disappointing, and failed to capture the spirit of the original coin-op game at all. The screen aspect was completely wrong, and this made the game more unplayable than it could have been.

'43 however, whilst drifting away from the original concept, is a much more playable game and has the right aspect ratio on the screen. The original coin-op game had a screen that was higher than it was wide. The official 1942 reverts to the usual computer screen that is wider than it is tall. As the more astute amongst This means that you don't get enough warning of an approaching





After six levels (three levels with two levels of difficulty each) you get to the spaceman, which is a Phoenix type of space craft where you have to shoot a hole in it and then destroy the spaceman.

The whole game is very similar to the Galaxians/Phoenix genre and works very well. There are enough differences between this and other games of this type to make it worthwhile. The instructions are extremely good. Instead of just saying 'kill everything that moves', they say 'kill everything that moves' and then gives you a recipe for cup cakes as well as a conversion chart for modifications to the recipe depending on the altitude that you live at!

Definitely a shoot 'em up game with classical aspirations. The graphics are good, colourful, and extremely fast. The usual Wemusic muzak plays along in the background at a cracking pace and the whole thing fits together extremely well. More from The Byte Engineers please.

SCORELINE	
Impact	85%
Originality	50%
Gameplay	90%
X-Factor	85%
OVERALL	80%

enemy. '43 puts the status information down either side of the screen and thus presents a more vertical screen section and makes the game play more like its original.

The penalty to pay is in the size of the graphics. In '43 the planes are much smaller than in 1942, but this is an advantage in some ways as you can get lots more craft on the screen without it appearing cluttered and the graphics appearing too chunky.

The game provides 99 levels and a little map of the islands that you will be passing over on one side of the screen. It is very fast

Title:

and extremely challenging. My one gripe is that landing and taking off at the end of each level takes far too long, though it is a good piece of animation and graphics, it gets a bit boring after the second or third time. Look out for more from Action.

SCORELINE	
Impact	6500
Originality	10°0
Gameplay	85°0
X-Factor	85°0
OVERALL	65%

KILLER RING

Computer: C64/AMS

**REAKTOR** (Ariolasoft) Supplier:

Price: £8.95

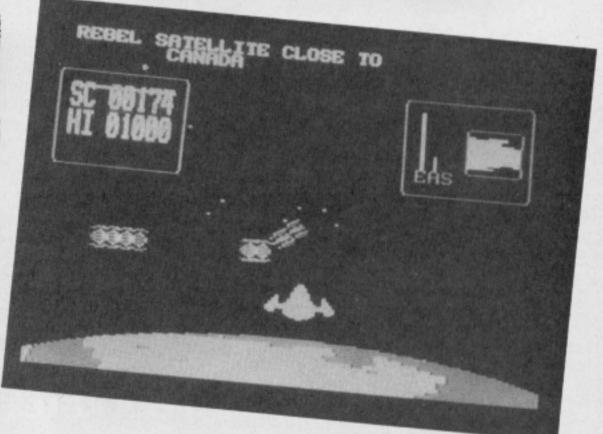


New from the recently launched shoot 'em up division of Ariolasoft comes this game from the little known software house the Byte Engineers.

A zap zap zap game in the classic mould. You have a craft that you can move around the screen

and that can fire up and down. Waves of aliens appear and you have to shoot them whilst they shoot at you. Aliens start off in set position like in Galaxians, but do not move in waves in the same way as if they were sticking to a rigid pattern.

Title: **DEFCOM** Computer: VARIOUS **QUICKSILVA** Supplier: Price: £8.95



This is a prime example of the kind of shoot 'em up that gives all of this objects that are quite quick, and sort of game a bad name by its some come at you from 'in' the mere association. The idea behind screen, but use the kind of Defcom is based on the 'Star pseudo-3D effect that went out of Wars' (SDI) defence system being the window years ago with 'Buck designed at the moment. Appar- Rogers'. The game is also very ently in 2056 the aliens take over difficult to understand in some the fully implemented and deadly ways. The instructions go on about orbital defence systems and turn a deeper strategy to the game them towards Earth.

ing above earth with your 'bog structions and certain control diffitions with a selection of fast rotat- ups should be quick and easy to ing globe below you that, I assume, understand, almost without lookis the Earth. Your weapons are a ing at the instructions. number of beam guns. Which ones you can use out of a possible four and bad shoot 'em ups. We don't is decided by what your current need another bad one. score is. This can be checked, along with a map of the world, and which options have been set, by pop up screens that ingeniously obscure the non-pausing on-screen action to your extreme detriment.

The game has largish moving where you are defending different The game itself puts you orbit-cities. However the indistinct instandard Eagle class E751'. Alien culties make this aspect of the craft come at you from all direc- game a bit of a farce. Shoot 'em

In a world of good, mediocre,

SCORELINE	
Impact	5%
Originality	35%
Gameplay	10%
X-Factor	5%
OVERALL	15%



Title: URIDIUM Computer: C64/SPEC Supplier: **HEWSON** Price: £8.95

When this game came out over a year ago, the shoot 'em up world was in a bit of a decline. People preaching the creed of the long, slow, boring adventure game were were even introduced to adventures in an attempt to make those who prefer a quick zap to stray from their chosen path (even though most adventure players can't stand pics).

However, a sign was sent from the great Asteroids player in the sky in the shape of Uridium from His chosen messenger Andrew Braybrook. Uridium was very fast, very colourful, and extremely well thought out.

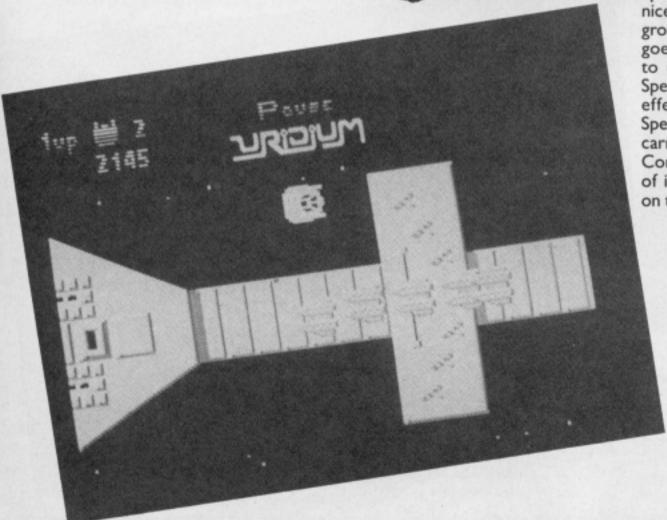
You have to destroy sixteen different space cruisers, each one named after a particular metal. Each craft has various surface targets that have to be wiped out, homing mines to be avoided, and escorting fighters to get rid of.

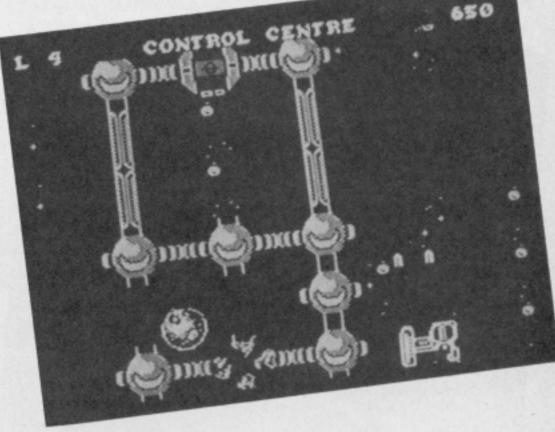
After a set time you have to land on the ship, fiddle with the reactor, and fly away. Blasting as much of the ship that is left as possible.

The game is fantastically at their most vociferous. Graphics complex, and one of the faster games around. The gameplay has been imitated since (see Psycastria or W.A.R.) but never equalled, certainly never exceeded. Uridium has recently come out on the Spectrum, where most of the original is retained, but without colour or as good animation and speed. Perhaps they'll get around to the Amstrad version soon.

> Uridium got the resurgence in shoot 'em ups going, let's hope it

SCORELINE	
Impact	90%
Originality	80%
Gameplay	90%
X-Factor	90%
OVERALL	000%





LIGHTFORCE Title: Computer: SPEC/AMS/C64 Supplier: FTL Price: £8.95

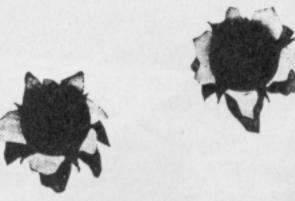
This is the first release from the colourful with no problems. shoot 'em up arm of Gargoyle in the business for a while you will know that Gargoyle started with a zap game. They then went on to produce Tir Na Nog, Marsport, and the like. Not wishing to tarnish their new image, their latest range of zap games is being released under the new title.

Lightforce started out as a new idea for handling colour on a nice graphics without all the resentation of the genre. grotesque colour clashing that goes on whenever anybody tries to use any sort of colour on a Spectrum screen. The resulting effect is quite good on the Spectrum, but the effect doesn't carry across to the Amstrad and Commodore with the same kind of impact. This is because games on these machines usually are fairly

The game itself is very good. Games - FTL. If you have been You fly your ship across various space and planetary surfaces, with patterns of evil nasties flying around the screen. In addition there are various ground targets that have to be knocked out.

The game is very well presented, the graphics are well thought out, and there is a logical difficulty progression from level to level. In all, this is a well thought Spectrum. This gives you some out game which is a definitive rep-

SCORELINE	1000000
Impact	65%
Originality	70%
Gameplay	75%
X-Factor	70%
OVERALL	70%
- Character	

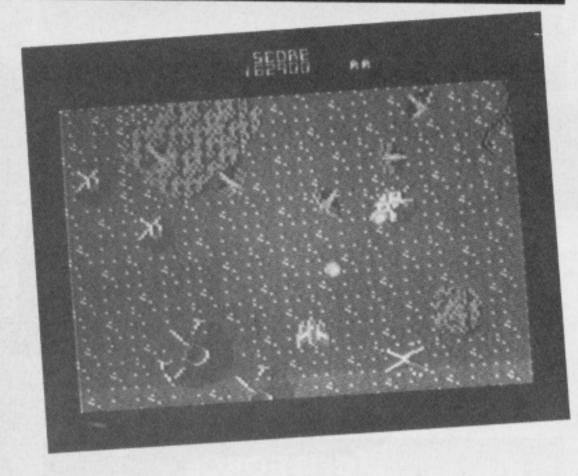


Title: **TERRA CRESTA** 

Computer: C64

Supplier: **IMAGINE** 

Price: £8.95



Terra Cresta is the sequel to the old coin-op game Moon Cresta by version by Incentive. Moon Cresta was also a coin-op game, and now Imagine (who used to do Konami stuff) have licenced it.

One of the more complex zap games, Terra Cresta has you flying over an alien landscape shooting at flying aliens as well as the ground installations and pre-historic monsters that wander around. There are also homing missiles to worry about and supply silos that

will improve your ship's armament.

All the usual problems and one Nitchibutsu, with the computer or two more to think about. Good graphics and animation make this a good game to play, though rather dated in concept.

SCORELINE	
Impact	8500
Originality	40°o
Gameplay	80°o
X-Factor	75°0
OVERALL	70%









Title: **PSYCASTRIA** 

Computer: C64/BBC

Supplier: **AUDIOGENIC** 

Price: £8.95

when it first came out on the BBC as it is very much like Uridium, except it's a bit cut down. However, Beeb people are used to cut down games as long as they run fast and on the BBC it does run very fast. However, when it arrived on the C64 it was a bit slower, still quite a lot like Uridium, but was still cut down.

So why buy a clone of Uridium, that isn't as good, for around the same money? No, I don't know either. On the BBC it was all right as there wasn't anything else to compare it to. You can't compare Psycastria and Uridium on the Beeb, because there's only Psycastria.

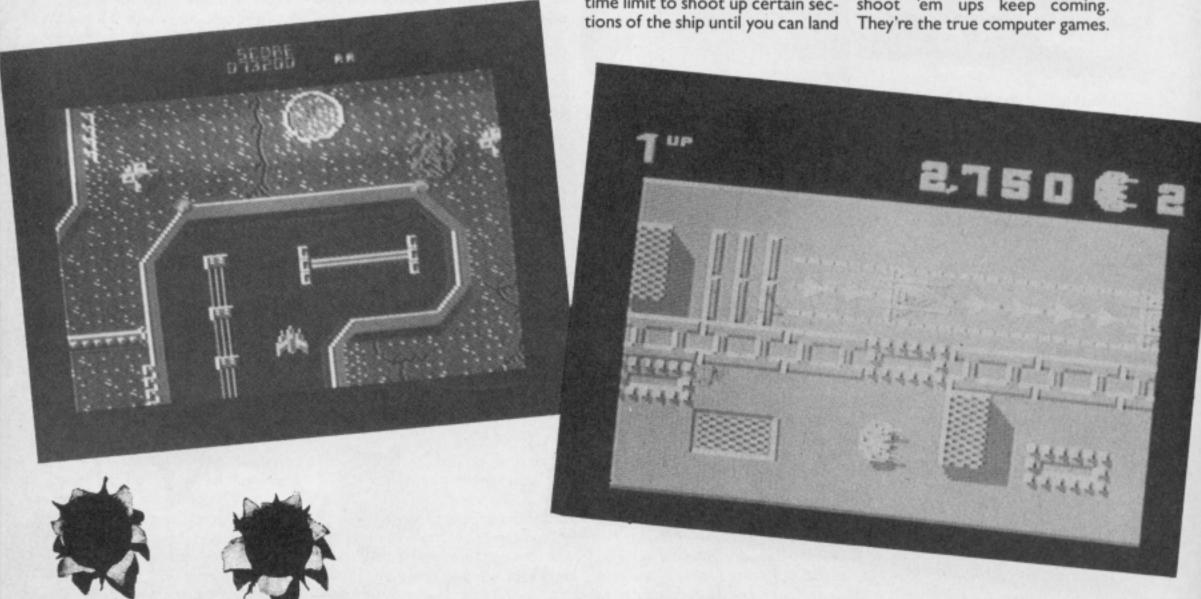
What about the game? well you are in a left/right flying spaceship, that looks like the Uridium ship, and moves in the same way as the Uridium ship. You are flying over 16 different enemy ships, that look very much like the 16 Uridium ships, except the graphics are not so good. And you have a time limit to shoot up certain sec-

This generated a lot of interest at one end of it on a very Uridiumesque landing strip.

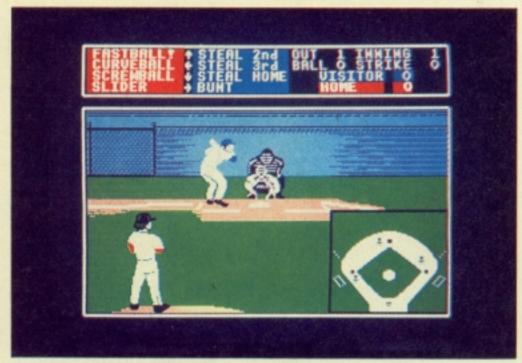
> On the Commodore 64, Psycastria is plagued by some awful software synthesised speech. A feature it could well do without. Psycastria on the Beeb is a good game, merely because there is nothing to compare it to. However, as the C64 version is plagiarised from Uridium I can see no reason why you should buy this rather than the Hewson game.

SCORELINE	
Impact	50%
Originality	0%
Gameplay	20%
X-Factor	30%
OVERALL	25%

So that concludes my wander around a couple of classics, a couple of duffers, and a few of the newer games. Lets hope that the shoot 'em ups keep coming.



## HARDBALL and TAPPER

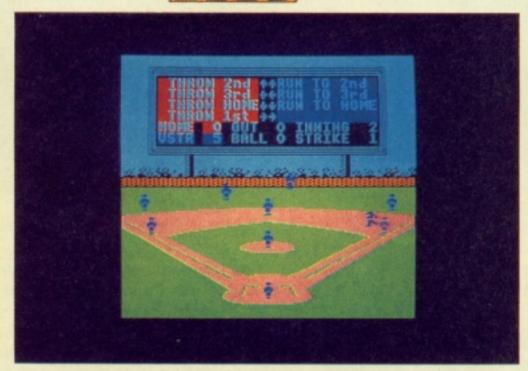






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# COM SAUDIE

Gauntlet on a Spectrum? Rubbish! Or perhaps not. Mike Roberts takes up the challenge.

his is the home version of the Atari Coin-Op Game of the Decade, the-four-player-at-a-time game of adventure and role-playing that everybody thought would be impossible to convert onto any computer, never mind the humble ZX Spectrum. US Gold have proved everyone wrong with a version of the game that is similar to the two player variant of Gauntlet that came into the arcades a few months after the original four player version first emerged.

The plot of the game is very straightforward. You and an accomplice descend into the depths of a treasure filled dungeon. Evil nasties abound, and you need keys, food, potion, charms, extra equipment and lots of other odds and ends to survive. Occasionally you find a treasure room where there is masses of treasure and no monsters, but it's a race against the clock to find the exit in time to pick up your extra bonus. . .

In the original coin-op game, four people could play using the four characters that the game provided. Elf, Wizard, Warrior, and Valkyrie. Each character has a number of good and bad points to it. For example, the elf is fast, but isn't as strong as the slower moving warrior, the valkyrie has medium ability at everything and the wizard fires magic balls and has a more potent magic capability than the rest but little hand-to-hand fighting ability. The US Gold verions of the game only lets two people play the game at once. Which two, from the initial four, can be selected at the start of the game from an attractive menu screen that is taken straight from the headboard illustration of the actual game.

One of the big features of the



original game was the option for extra players to join the game whilst it was in progress. This is also supported on the Spectrum version of the game. Even if the one player

Each character has a number of good and bad points.

option has been set, a second player can join the game by pressing the second fire button on the keyboard. He will then pop into existence as one of the other three characters (chosen at random) and start playing the game with his full compliment of 2000 health points.

This feature can be used to great effect with two players. As one dies

he can re-enter the game at the same level as the other player, who will also exhaust his energy a bit later and can re-enter the game as well. It doesn't improve your points standing, but it will get you a lot further into the game.

The implementation of the game on the Spectrum is as close to the original as is physically possible on that computer, at least as far as gameplay is concerned. This is the mistake that Dandy made, the graphics had a lot to say, but the gameplay suffered dramatically as a result. In the official Spectrum Gauntlet the graphics are a bit simplified, but the play is all there as well as the speed.

The gameplay is identical to the coin-op game, the little heroes run around in the same way, the nasty monsters all move around in the







same way, the dungeons are all the same as the coin-op game, and all the objects are in the same place. This means that experienced Gauntleteers will not have wasted all their time (and money) practising on the coin-op game.

The only difference that I can see in the game are that, when your energy drops a bit low, you can't shove in extra coins. However, my bank manager thinks this is an excellent idea. Also there isn't a thief to take your posessions, though to replace this there is more poisoned

its one advantage is the great speed at which everything happens.

food than usual. Poisoned food takes energy away from you, rather than building you up.

The graphics all suffer from the crudity of the Spectrum, but this is only apparent with the colour attribute clashing as the actual graphics are quite effective and are animated well. The use of colour is extremely limited and characters tend to be a single colour, over four attribute squares, rather than being larger and using a few different attributes. Four attribute squares is around the right proportion of the

Spectrum screen in relation to the original Gauntlet screen. This works well and allows the incredible speed of the original game to be translated (in part) to the conversion. The game is certainly faster than on the Amstrad.

The one main difference that the Spectrum game has over the coin-op or Amstrad version is the aspect of the graphics. In the Amstrad and coin-op games, the view is from directly above the screen. However, in the Spectrum game, the view is slightly angled so, instead of having a bird's-eye view, it is more of a 'perched' eye view. Where you can see the characters from above and slightly to one side.

The main problem that I can see is in the way that the different levels work. In the coin-op game, the first nine levels went in strict sequence and the 503 levels after that appeared at random, with the treasure rooms appearing every 3-9 screens also at random. The way it works on the Spectrum is to load them off tape. The game first loads the title and credits screens (both very similar to the coin-op ones) and then the character selection screen. From this you go into the main game and go through all the set pattern screens.

After the set pattern it gets more compex. As far as I can make out from looking at the game and talking

to US Gold. The game loads in ten levels at a time. From these ten levels the game actually plays four of them and a treasure room if required, and then loads in another ten. When you get to the end of the tape, you can rewind it to the beginning. From the beginning you go through the tape all over again, but the chances are that the combination of four rooms from ten will be different. Ensuring a completely different chain of levels.

## THE DEEPER DUNGEONS

Next year, US Gold hope to release an expansion pack for Gauntlet that will have more dungeons in it. In the same way that Atari released Gauntlet II onto an unsuspecting coin-op public. With the new pack in mind, the people who have bought the game will be asked to design their own dungeons and the best designs will go into the new game.

Half the instruction space is taken up describing how to design levels for Gauntlet, how to enter, and what you win (tee-shirts and copies of the game or disk). This doesn't merely waste space but provides a valuable source of information about the game, consisting mainly of a list of nasties, their generators, and a list of all the other different types of things that you can find underground. Read this, and you won't be surprised by the unexpected.

## WELL?...

So, what do I think of it? Compared to the Amstrad game it is slightly inferior especially when viewed in comparison to the coin-op game itself, which isn't particularly surprising. However, its one advantage is the great speed at which everything happens. This totally kills Dandy or any of the other Gauntlet clones.

Compared to the state-of-the-art in Spectrum games, this has got to be the best thing to hit Spectrums since Torus managed to turn out a decent version of Elite. Lets hope that the team of US Gold producing and Gremlin Graphics programming produce more in the future, because Gauntlet is excellent.

## SCORELINE

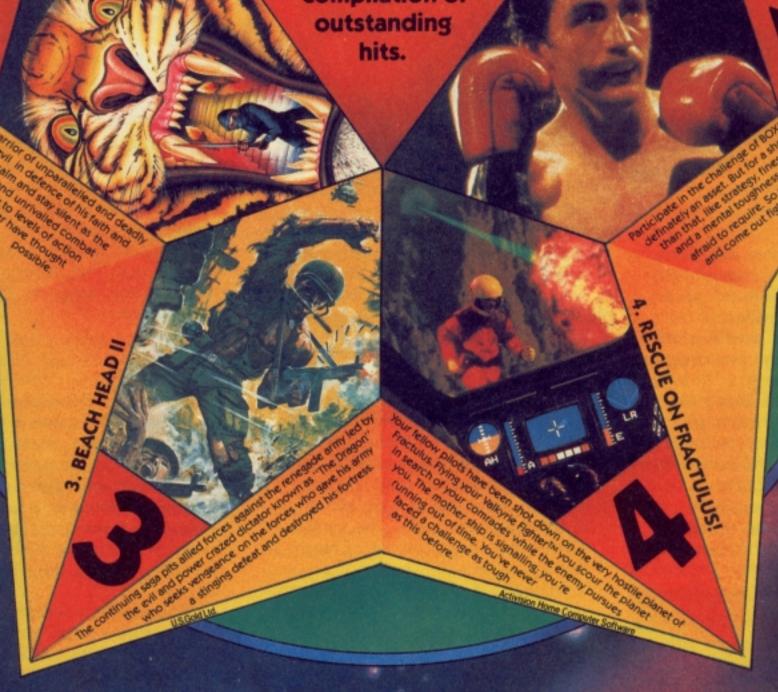
Impact	90%
Gameplay	100%
Originality	100%
X-Factor	85%
OVERALL	94%

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Addictive Games' Football Manager has a serious rival by Scanatron. Is it really double the fun?

football management game market sewn up for around two years now but an heir lis apparent. Scanatron's selfheralded game of The Double is here at long last.

The eventual aim of the game is obviously to win the FA Cup and the League Championship, but you have a lot further to go. Your team starts off in the Third Division and must progress to Division One season by season. This can take some time, but more of that later.

The dream of every manager

ddictive Games have had the important, without money you can't get the team you dream of managing.

Apart from buying and selling players you must also decide on employing one or two scouts, a physiotherapist and paying for crowd control and ground improvements. Wrong decisions can prove a severe strain on your resources but the bank can come to your rescue. The amounts that may be borrowed depends on your team's status which can also depend on your bank balance!

Each match you play is preis to pilot his team to the top of ceded by the routine of finding out

\*Wrong decisions can prove a severe strain on your resources

with a win in the Cup then his dream is doubly fulfilled. For players of The Double this dream must be realised before you can honestly say you have completed the game.

You may ask why only three divisions have been used. According to Scanatron this is because of memory limitations in realising an accurate simulation of the football scene. This excuse is also used for the rather jerky and match simulations. Personally, I suspect that the programmers have not taken full advantage of data compression although I have to admit that the expressed philosophy behind the game seems extremely ambitious and could account for this memory problem.

At the start of the game you are approached by a Third Division club who are willing to gamble their fortunes on your unproven. or suffer a reload in the desperate hope that a favourite team might be selected. It's best to go with the first offer in the hope that your attract an offer from your best loved team later on.

As manager your two prime responsibilities are the financial arrangements and team development. Finances are by far the most

the League. If this can be combined if you're at home or away. If you're playing at home you will have to estimate the crowd you will draw and inform the police accordingly. Guessing too high will cost extra cash but guessing too low may result in riots on the terraces and a possible heavy fine from the FA. To help you get the closest possible estimate, the game allows you to look at your opponents' support to see if a large contingent of visiting fans can be expected.

You will also have to pay for a simple animation in the graphic physio if any of your team are injured and, if improvements have to be made to your side, one or two scouts can be sent out to suss out likely signings.

> This phase is followed by selection of your team from a squad of up to 18 players. This is the last piece of interaction with your team. The computer takes over to select the strongest teams from the squads of the 65 other clubs.

Before the match takes place skills. You either accept gracefully you have the option of watching

riots on the terraces

skillfull management will eventually your team play, watching another match or just having the results appear on the screen. If you opt to watch a match be prepared to wait because each game takes about 20 minutes. To watch each of the 42 matches in a season

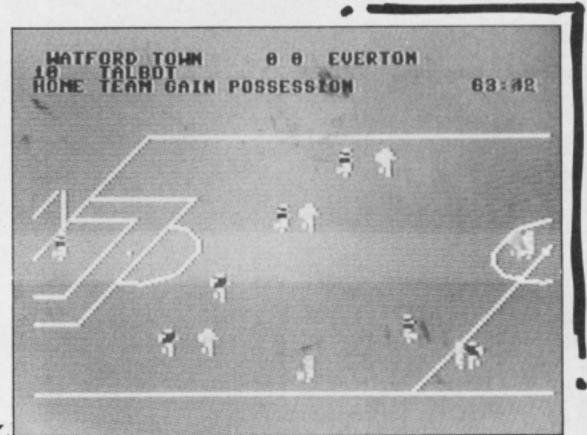
The Double Title:

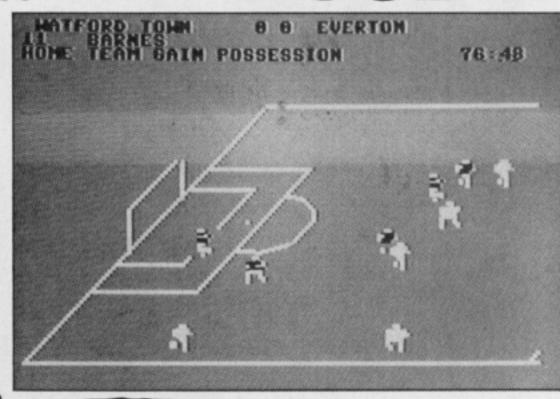
Computer: Commodore 64

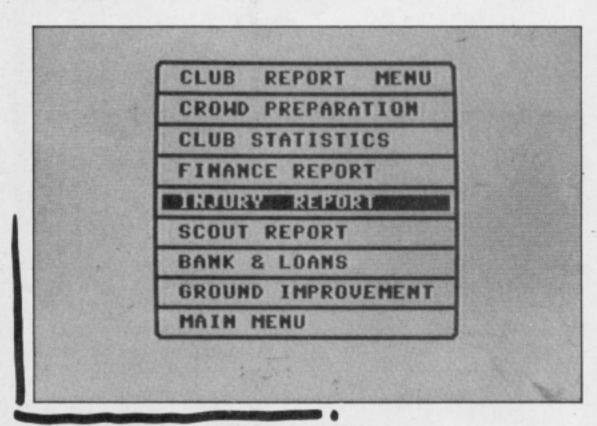
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PLAYER HEFFERMAN NIGHTINGALE	POSITION 2	TEAH TEAH
BECK O'DRISCOLL MORRE!!	167	TEAM
THOMPSON CLARKE CLARIDGE	198	TEAH TEAH TEAH
JOSEPH HUNTER MEATHERLY	18 6 7	RESERVE RESERVE RESERVE PESERVE
SIMS HODGES BARROW	CONTINUE.	RESERVE TEAM TEAM
SELECT TEAM	HITH CURSOR.	

would take 14 hours. This excludes any time spent on managerial matters or the ten minutes to complete updates on other matches and match attendances which accompanies each League game. There are also Cup matches which must be watched!

As you can see, you won't win the Double in a day. With good judgement and a fair amount of. luck, I estimate that the minimum duration of a Double winning effort would be three days of round the clock gameplay! Thank goodness there's a save facility.

time taken is that each match played on a particular day is treated



Currently Bradford and I are riding high at the top of the division with The reason for some of the hopes of promotion buzzing through our brains.

My main criticisms centre on

## You won't win the Double in a

by the computer and each match result is calculated. This is the vary considerably. Using the save some unseen changes had would help. occurred in the teams but I doubt

individually. As transfers and the lack of choice when the Cup injuries take place the strengths matches are played and the inability and weaknesses of each club is to remove poor players from your affected. This must be allowed for side. One of the Cup games must be watched even when your team must be played before a realistic has been eliminated. Boring (except for the Final). Duff players theory but in practise I found that fill squad positions which could be results of the same match could occupied by better signings but unless some mug buys them you're facility a win of 2-0 was replayed stuck. Perhaps the ability to dump to give a result of 0-4. Perhaps a few at the end of the season

On balance, The Double is streets ahead of Football Manager Considering there are 1,000 and I found that the extreme players' names and 66 different slowness of the game did not clubs, there are very few errors. detract greatly from the Watford and Bury fans will be satisfaction given by my irritated to see the suffix 'Town' accomplishments. If you're mad

## hopes of promotion buzzing through our

by Jakub being constantly labelled are based on the 1985/86 season. Middlesborough will be pleased to see their team in a higher league counterparts, though I suppose Wimbledon's fans won't be so pleased.

My given team was Bournemouth and we managed to reach sixth place in the Third Division in our first season. I was then offered a job with freshly relegated Bradford City so I left my mistakes behind me and took up the offer.

following their team's name and about soccer then give this game Bury fans will further be irritated serious consideration. Who knows, you might not only win the lakup. I think Scanatron should Double but also get to watch a real have taken more care to eliminate match and meet a real manager. all spelling errors because it can Scanatron are offering the create a bad impression. On the opportunity to meet Howard plus side is the fact that the teams Kendall, Everton's manager, after watching the team play a League Supporters of teams like match. The first person to achieve the Double and provide documentary evidence will win the trip. than their flesh and blood Mmmm, well I must dash now, Bradford calls. Here we go, here we go, here we go . . .

## SCOPEL INE

SCOKELINE	
Impact	85%
Originality	73%
Gameplay	69%
X-Factor	80%
OVERALL	77%

## **ArcticFox** Computer: Commodore 64 **Ariolasoft** Supplier:

Price:

A lone tank battles in the frozen wastes of Antarctica. Eric Doyle takes control of the situation.

he number of vector graphic games seems to be increasing rapidly as the months go by. Until now Novagen's Mercenary gave me the greatest sense of 'being there' but Ariolasoft's Arcticfox is a worthy challenger.

The year of Arcticfox is 2005 and an alien force from the planet STV-7X has taken over the Antarctic regions of Earth. In their frozen seclusion they are busily at work converting the atmosphere to a more acceptable one of ammonia, methane and chlorine. This just will not do and the only weapon capable of defeating the invasion is Slye-Hicks MX-100, codename: Arcticfox.

The enemy have protected themselves behind a force field but the belief is that this can be destabilised by destroying their main fortress. To do this means venturing across the frozen wastes battling against untold odds. Well almost untold, there is a database which details all of the enemy craft and a more formidable line-up I've

Basically there are six mobile units which will harry you to your doom. These are usually found in task forces but there are reconallow task forces to home in on you. Although the plane is otherwise unarmed its accompanying fighters spit deadly missiles in your direction.

It is possible to blast them all from the skies with a few well aimed shells, but elevating the gun often leaves you motionless and a sitting target for any sharpshooter in the area. By far the best way of dealing with the airborne foe is to blast a missile or two in their general direction. Once fired the missile can be directed by the joystick according to flight control conventions. This means that pulling back on the joystick will make the missile rise, pushing forward makes it plummet earthwards.

On the ground there are squadrons of tanks which may be dangerous light, manoeuverable vehicles or heavily armoured sluggish ones in areas of greater importance. The Light Tanks are probably the most dangerous because of their swift movements. They can fire several shells in the time it takes a Heavy Tank to fire just one of its blockbusters.

The final mobile massacre machine is the floating mine. These will home in on any tank in their vicinity and blast it to smithereens. naisance vehicles which use stealth Fast action is required to eliminate

## Suicidal maniacs can try the tournament level 0000000000

rather than firepower to indicate their threat. your location to their forces. The unarmed vehicles creep up along the ground and in the air. The Recon Sled is easily dealt with as long as you watch your radar. The Recon Flyer is much more difficult.

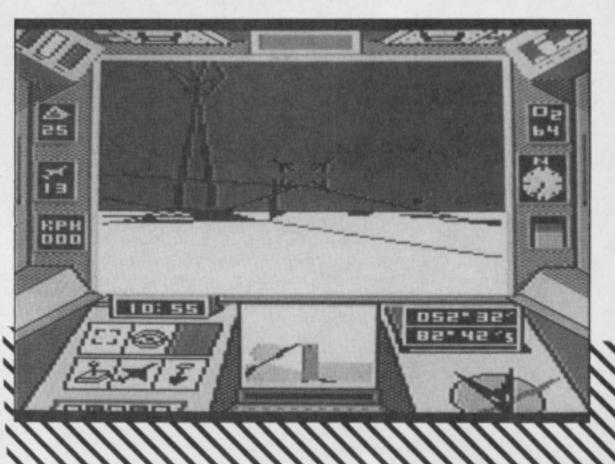
Usually the Flyer is accompanied by fighter planes which are the deadliest of the enemy's armament. If the flyer gets close enough it will attach a transmitter to the 'Fox and this beacon will

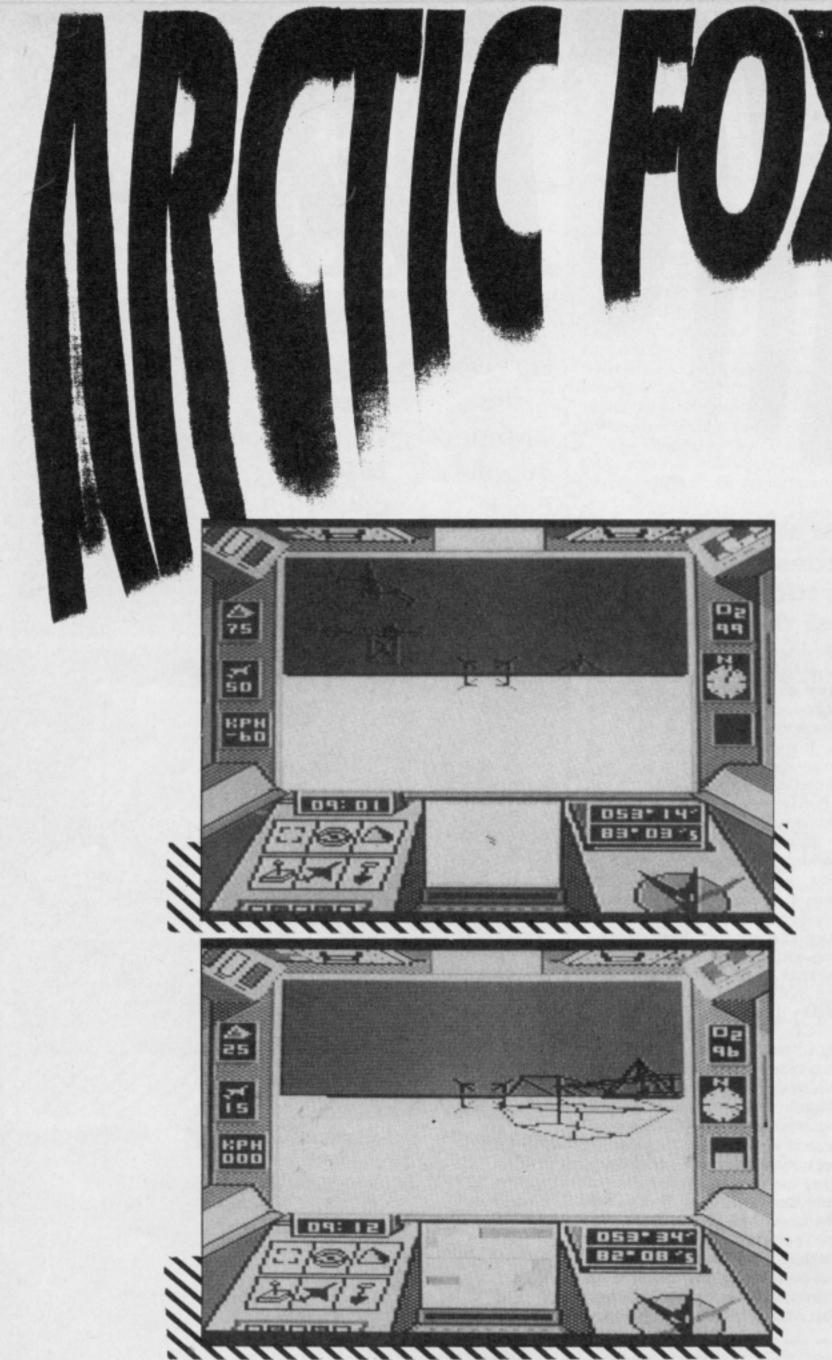
Immobile but potentially more, dangerous than any of these weapons are the rocket launchers littered about the high ground vantage points. These units have a firing zone which spreads in an arc of 140 degrees. Obviously the best way to deal with them is to approach from the rear and stick a shell up their backs.

Buildings such as cloaking radar stations, communications forts and the target of the mission, the main



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fort, may be encountered. Apart from the ring of steel around them they are otherwise unprotected and easy meat for the battle-hardened Commander of a "Fox. Eliminating these units renders the enemy vulnerable to attack and gives you an advantage in battle which could be decisive.

The final enemy installations which will be encountered are the numerous air converters which are busy converting the atmosphere to the poisonous mixture I told you about earlier. As they are reduced in number, so the rate at which your percentage oxygen count

reduces. For a longer game these targets must be eliminated as quickly as possible.

Vector graphics allow you to view any object in a holographic way. As you approach an object it grows in size but, more than this, the aspect changes as you move around or over the object. This facility allows you to climb smaller hills to gain a heightened vantage point. So realistic is this effect that as you climb you can occasionally pop off a shell or two at passing aircraft. This is because of the increased elevation of your gun as you climb upwards.

The ice world is crazed with deep crevasses which must be avoided at all costs. Even though you can pick them out visually it is better to use your compass and radar to determine the most advantageous pathway. The enemy are no fools and often position their main installations on the lip of a crevass which is ready to swallow up any incautious attacker.

The display panel lacks the animated hand which featured on the original Amiga game but is nonetheless an impressive piece of graphics. Apart from the normal forward-facing vector display, you

can switch the radar out and a rear view display in. To have two juxtaposed vector displays on the screen at once is a brilliant piece of programming which puts all other similar games in the shade.

All the information you need for your assault is here. A control panel allows you to select the 'Fox's mode. Change elevation, select rear view, drop land mines, fire missiles or change the joystick forward and reverse controls. The final option allows you to go to earth like a real fox by digging down into the snow.

The play options allow you to view the enemy craft or to enter one of the three levels of play. The first level is a practice mode which may be followed by the beginner's game. Suicidal maniacs can also try the tournament level but, be warned, this is Hell on Earth if you're not a seasoned campaigner.

The enemy force field forms an impenetrable barrier around the 'Fox, a handy way for the programmers to define the battlefield. Within this ring is a range of terrains spanning snowy wastes and lush green tundra regions. On snow the tank can reach its top speed of 144 kilometres per hour but on tundra this reduces considerably.

Often the game opens with a face-off between two tanks. The best mode of attack is to move in to close quarters by initially reversing and turning in either direction to avoid the inevitable shell hurled in your direction. Then, keeping the enemy on the edge of your screen, advance until you can allow the tank to slip off the edge of the screen, quickly turn and fire. With a bit of practice you can easily outmanouevre your opponent and slip off a shot before it knows what hit it.

Arcticfox is a state-of-the-art game which uses all of the tricks learned on the Amiga to improve the standard for the C64. It was just a few years ago that Battle-zone was the slickest game in the arcades, Arcticfox surpasses this as it supercedes all but the depth of play of Mercenary. The future is here and its name is Arcticfox.

## SCORELINE

**OVERALL** 

SCOULTHIAL	
Impact	97%
Originality	86%
Gameplay	90%
X-factor	95%

92%

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s the Super Bowl approaches joystick coaches can recreate the action of American Football without the bruises. The two latest contenders for the software Super Bowl are Headcoach from Addictive "Football Manager" Games and the next game from Nexus, Super Sunday.

Unless you've been hiding in a deserted cave in Outer Mongolia you must know something of the padded Quarterbacks, Wide Receivers, Running Backs and Kickers that chase an oval ball around a grided pitch.

The essence of the game lies in the four attempts, or 'downs', to progress the ball ten yards. To do this, and fool the defence, the offence must devise a complex series of plays. These usually involve either giving the ball to a running back such as Walter Payton, Eric Dickerson or Marcus Allen to run as far as they can with it or get the Quarterback to pass it forwards to a sprinting wide receiver. If they make ten yards or more then they start another series with a first down.

Reaching your opponents' endzone (end of the pitch) scores a touchdown with an extra point kick, like a rugby conversion, making a total of seven points. Kicking a field goal scores only three but can be the difference between winning a losing.

Each team play a series of 16 games with the top teams progressing to the knockout playoffs that lead to the Super Bowl.

SUPER SUNDAY (Nexus, C64, Spectrum, £9.95)

This latest game from Nexus takes you straight to the Super Bowl itself in a game inspired by the superb Avalon Hill board game, Paydirt.

All the actual passing, running and kicking statistics of some of Football's greatest teams are packed into this game but in playable form. The details of the 28 teams that contested the 1966, 68, 70, 73, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86 and 1987 Super Bowls are all included and can be matched against each other. You can even play the 1973 Miami Dolphins against the 1984 "Dan Marino" Miami Dolphins. Because of the college draft and players retiring and trading they're totally different teams.

As in Head Coach you choose the plays that the on screen players attempt to carry out. Unlike Head Coach you play every second of the game, call every play, score every point and hear (and almost feel) every bone crushing tackle.

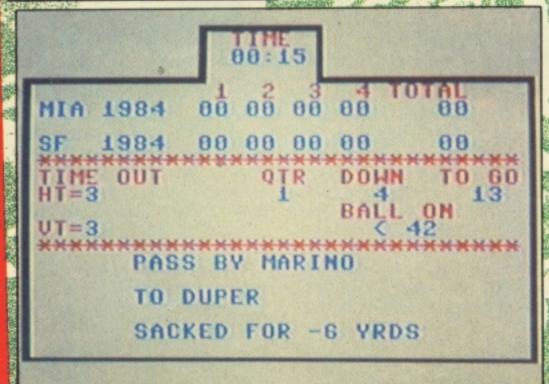
On offence you can choose from four running plays, three passing plays, two special quarterback moves (short yardage ploys), punting and a field goal attempt. You can then select one of three formations either the standard setup, one including four wide receivers and a three running back formation.

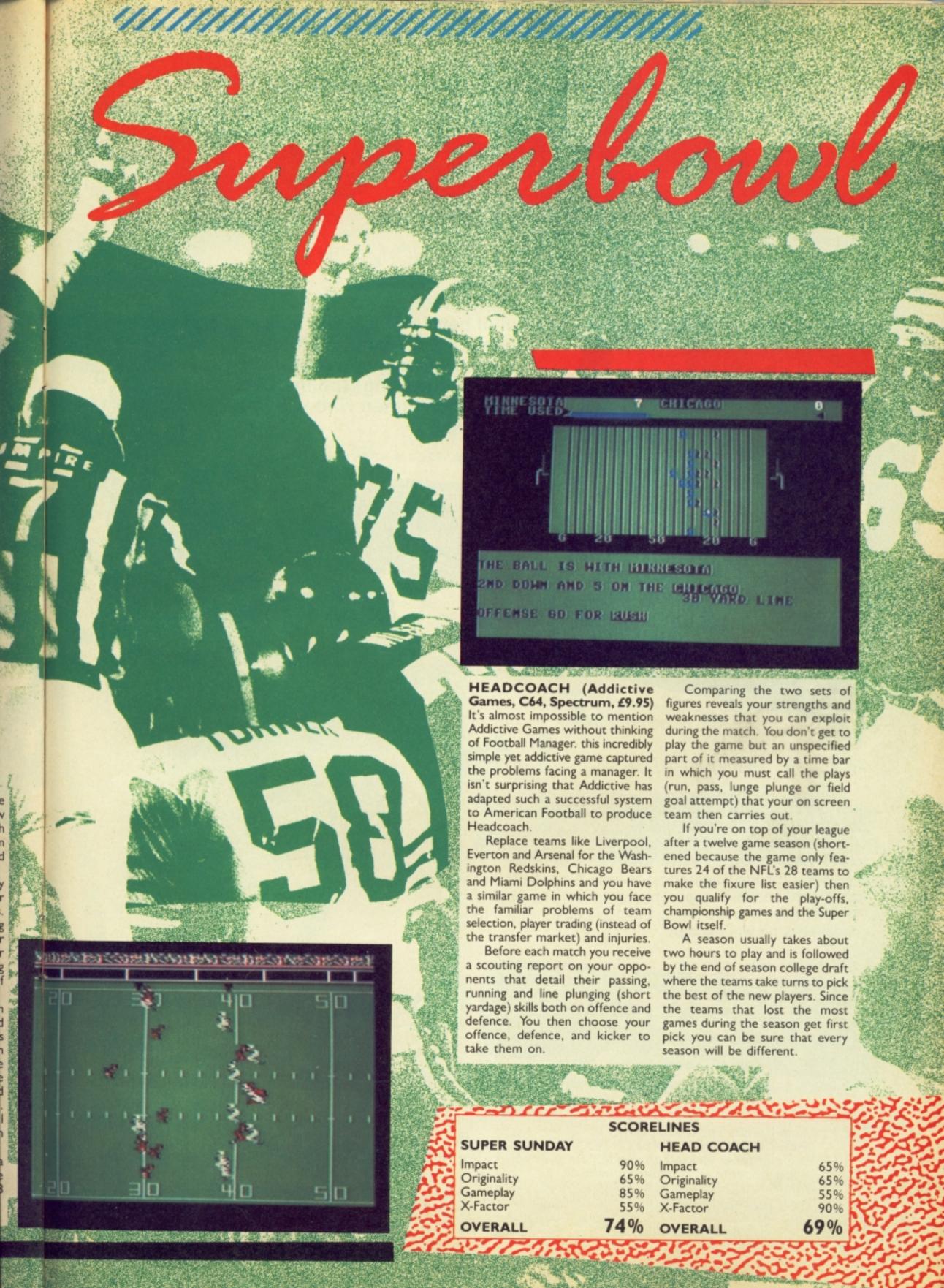
Finally you choose the quarterback who is going to throw the ball and the receiver to catch it in a passing play or a runner in running play. Then sit back and watch the action.

In defence the choice is simply to choose a normal defence or one biased to stop a run or a pass. You can then single out opposing players as the ones to get. Either the runner, a specific wide receiver or the quarterback. Get it wrong and you could give away a lot of yards.

I played a pre-production version of this game and enjoyed it despite some annoying bugs particularly when the on screen action doesn't quite match the internal maths. Nexus say these bugs will be investigated and ironed out before the game's release. Even if they don't it's still compulsive action for gridiron groupies.

Nexus is also planning a supplement tape containing the end of season statistics for all 28 NFL teams.







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## GIVE ME SOME ( STICK



Not one, not two, but TEN fabulous Konix joysticks await ten lucky winners.

already? Chances are it's one of those boring old designs. Any serious games player will tell you that one stick is never enough, different games need different styles of joysticks to bring out your best performances. We've joined forces with Konix Ltd and Solution PR to bring you a competition which you ignore at your game-playing peril.

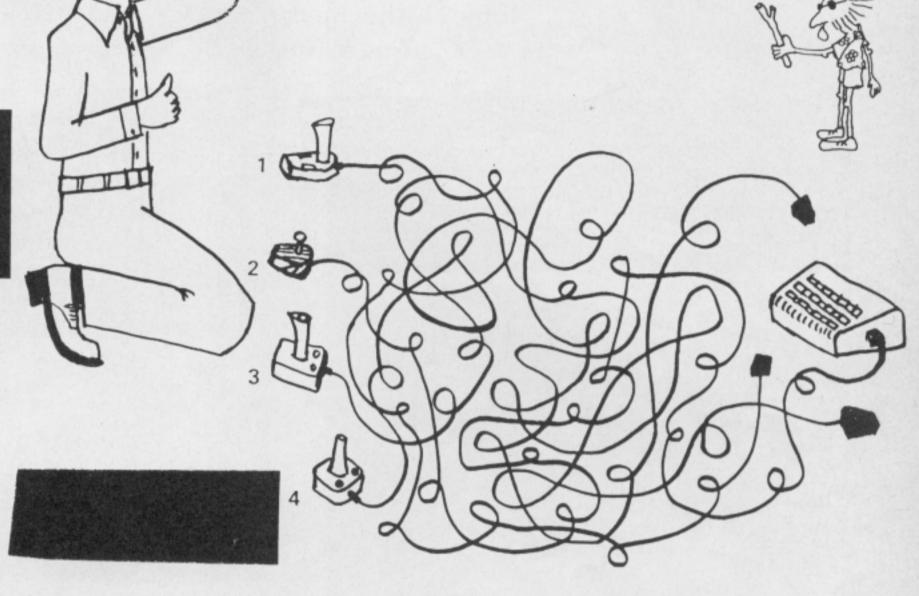
What better addition to your championship collection of joy-sticks than an ergonomically designed Speed King? Styled to fit comfortably in your hand, the joystick features a cluster of four sensitive microswitches operated by a small, short-throw lever which allows your natural reflex speed to show through.

The fire button is a sensibly placed bar which lies under your index finger so that you don't have to rest the stick on a flat surface to play your latest shoot-em-up, and you still have the avantage of a two-handed attacking technique.

To become one of the winners of this hunky chunk of high technology cast your eyes over the picture and help little Mike to sort out his problem. As you can see Mike is a messy micro user and he's got his sticks in a twist. He's keen to beat his old high score and get his name in Gamer but which stick should he use?

Help Mike to get his hi-score by sorting out the tangle and tell us which stick is plugged in. There's only one Speed King and this is the one he should be using. If he doesn't he's an idiot, if he does he's an ace.

Work out which stick is connected to the computer and whether Mike is an ace or an idiot, write the number on the form



below and then tick the correct sentence to describe little Mike. Fill in your name and address and the type of computer you own. Write both of your answers on the back of an envelope and send the entry coupon to our offices.

Your name could be one of those featured as a lucky winner in Computer Gamer, so go ahead and give it some stick.

## **RULES**

- I Each entry must be made on the official Computer Gamer entry form, correctly completed. Photocopies will be disqualified.
- 2 All entries must reach us by first post on December 20th 1986.
- 3 The competition is not available to relatives of employees of Solution PR, Konix Ltd or Argus Specialist Publications, their distributors or printers.
- 4 The answers to the competition must be clearly written on the back of the envelope.
- 5 The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.

Konix	Gamer February
Name:	
Address:	
	Postcode:
Computer:	
Mike will use joystick number	
Mike is an idiot	
Mike is an ace	

Send your entry to Speed King, Computer Gamer, ASP Ltd, I Golden

Square, LONDON WIR 3AB.



hatrick of new football games are ready to thrill the terraces of joystick Linekers but do they have the excitement of a thrilling FA Cup final or will they send you to sleep like Arsenal's

defence?

The lineup for this month's

match features the curious Peter Shilton's Handball Maradona from Grandslam (APS), Footballer of the Year from Gremlin Graphics and the modestly named Super Soccer released by Imagine.

Title:

Peter Shilton's Handball Maradona

Computer:

C64, Amstrad,

Supplier:

**Spectrum Argus Press** Software

(Grandslam)

Price:

£6.95

Handball Maradona has two main claims to fame. Not only is it the first game to be named after a single controversial incident in a World Cup match but also contains the infamous phrase "a game of two halves" in it's instructions!

The game can be played in three modes practice, skill upgrading, and playing a match. In each mode you must move your keeper and then make him dive in one of seven directions to save the computer's assorted scoring attempts. These range from corners and free kicks to neat passing plays and single dribbles, but most are easy to stop. If you save all four shots in a skill upgrading session you'll move up the 16 skill levels that range from

Unfortunately, that's all there is to it. No international matches, no cup finals just an assortment of meaningless matches and sixteen skill upgrading sessions. Peter Shilton's Handball Maradona would be fine as a budget game but at £6.95 it's an own goal.

SCORELINE	
Impact	45%
Originality	70%
Gameplay	30%
X-Factor	65%
OVERALL	52%

Title: Computer: Supplier: Price:

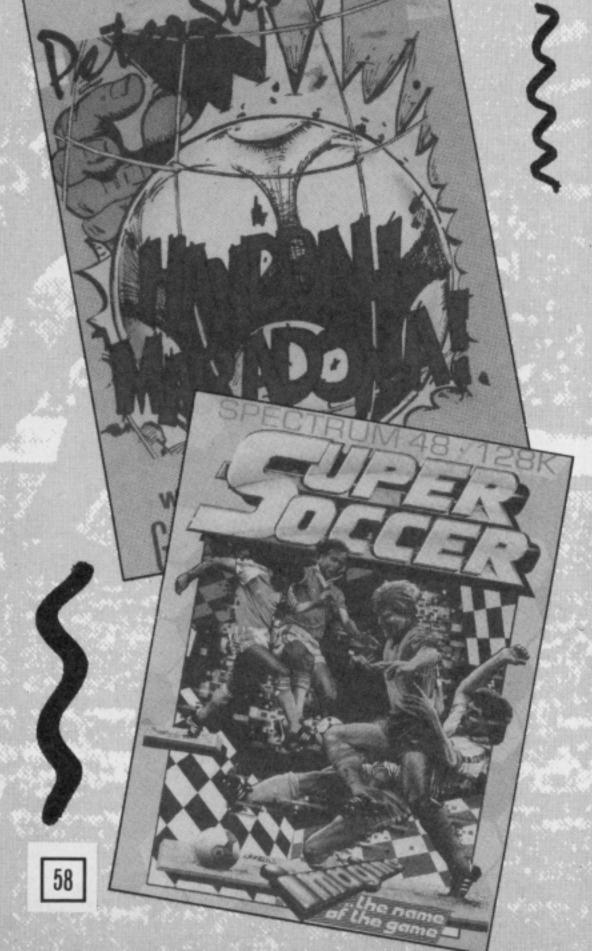
Super Soccer Spectrum 48K Imagine £7.95

This looks like another rewrite of Ocean's Matchday. This time the game features one and two player options, practice, single game and tournament options and a more realistic gameplay including fouls, set pieces and chips, crosses and lobs. This produces more complicated game controls but a more interesting game.

Now at last here's a computer football game in which you can chop down a forward that's left you standing. You might get a warning or a yellow card but it's usually worth it.

It's at free kicks and corners that Super Soccer scores on it's rivals as before the kick is taken you've got 30 seconds to set your players on a plan of the pitch. Then you can either chip the keeper, lob the ball over the defensive wall or drive a shot from 20 yards out.

Unfortunately, Super Soccer is also very slow to play and best



# FOOTBALLER OF THE

played between two humans of equal ability otherwise you won't stand a chance and will spend most of the game trying to make your players run in the right direction. However, players prepared to put in the practice will find it to be an excellent game.

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of en er plu

SCORELINE	SEL SON
Impact	70%
Originality	55%
Gameplay	65%
X-Factor	60%
OVERALL	63%



Title: Footballer of the Year C64, Spectrum, Computer: Amstrad, MSX Supplier: **Gremlin Graphics** £7 95

Gremlin's Footballer of the Year challenges you to make it to the top and win this coveted award.

You begin the game as a 17 year old apprentice with the team of your choice. You have 10 scoring cards and must buy others as the season's progress.

With a scoring card you can elect to play in a match and, depending on the card's value, have 1, 2 or 3 shots at goal. If you use a card then you immediately head for the action, if not the teleprinter reports the results.

There are only two types of attempt at goal either a penalty or a shot before two defenders close in and tackle you. The number of goals you score is reported and may turn defeat into victory.

By selecting icons you can view your current status which shows

your skill level (from Average to Excellent), your wage level (£75 -£1200 a week) and the division your present club is currently in as well as your goal tally (league, cup, Europe, and International), the league position of your club, buy a transfer, or draw an incident. These are the game's equivalent of a chance card and can produce anything from a speeding fine, pools win, business profit or even a transfer.

Transfers are usually good news as they often mean a wage increase which is more important to a new player than promotion - or even a cup winners medal.

The season lasts the full 42 games and plays in under an hour since the games you don't have any interest in are over in seconds.

Once you get to the first



COX STAYS

division and reach 'excellent' skill level by scoring lots of goals, you might get picked for international matches (which brings goals and appearance fees) and may even be nominated for the Footballer of the Year Award.

The game is highly enjoyable and incredibly addictive to football fans despite the occasional bug (3rd Division Walsall once played Bayern Munich in a league match, and league cup goals are counted

twice!) and the fact it's too easy as I managed to win the award three times in a row!

SPECTRUM 48/128K

SCORELINE	
Impact	85%
Originality	90%
Gameplay	75%
X-Factor	65%
OVERALL	80%

## Knuckle down to our Melbourne House competition and you could win a smart new tracksuit or a

copy of the game at least!

his is a tough world an' only the brave survive. Knucklebusters are everywhere an' Melbourne 'ouse wanna help someone, see. What we've blagged from 'em is 20 copies of their fabulous beat-em-up and a special first prize of a tracksuit so you can be a cool dude as you beat the wit out of some wiseguy android.

In the game you become Deke, a rebel with a cause, and your aim is to escape the Penal Reform Centre. Deke has successfully deactivated the alarm systems but the androids are on his trail and he has to fight his way out of prison or become an android himself.

## How to Enter

What you must do to qualify for our prizewinners' draw is to think up a name for the city in which the game takes place. If you want to know more. Write the name on the back of the envelope, remembering to put your entry form inside first!

Send your entry to Knucklebusters, Computer Gamer, ASP Ltd, I Golden Square, London WIR 3AB, to reach us by February 28th, 1987. The results will be published in the April issue of the magazine.

## Rules

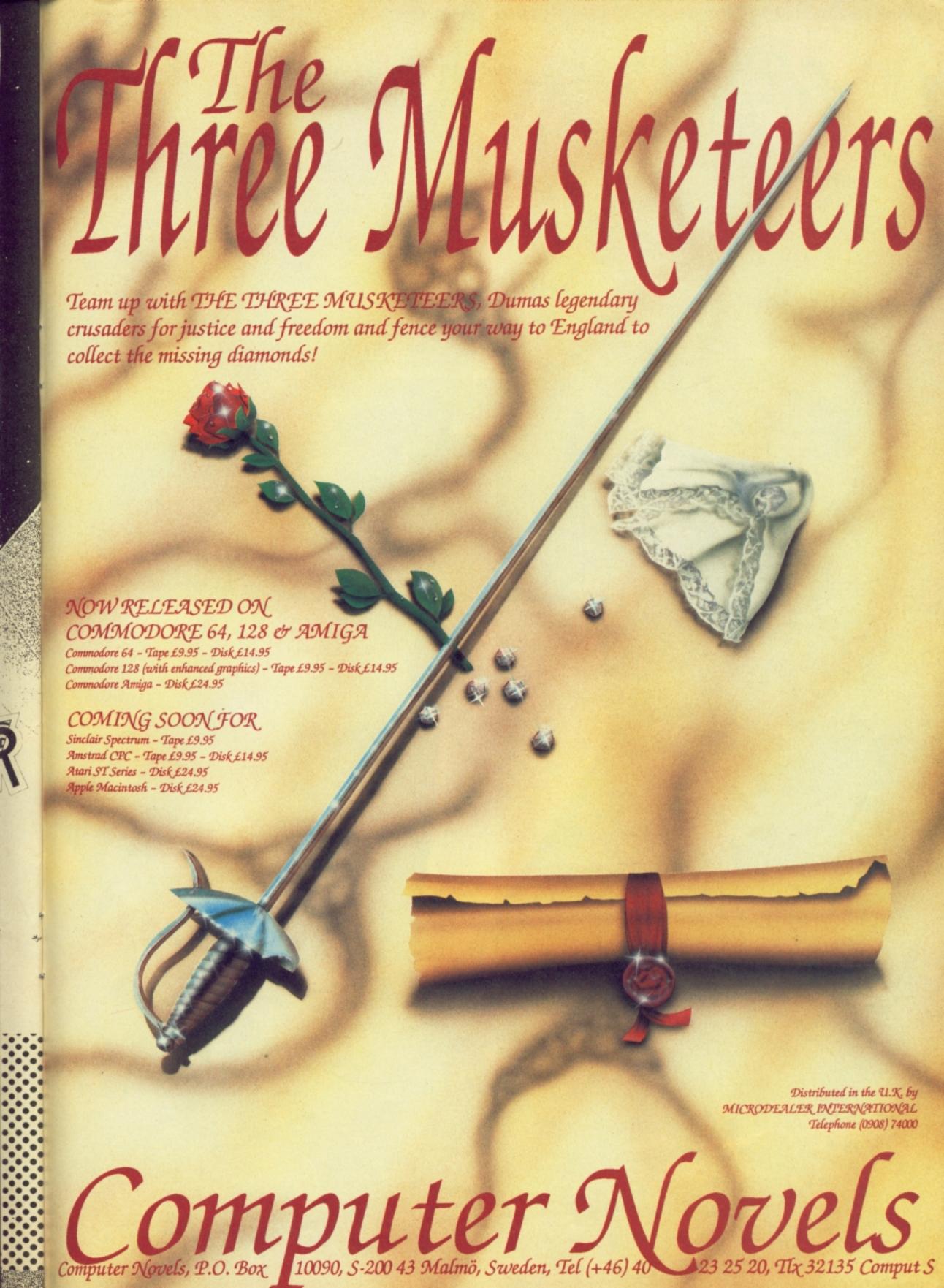
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- 3. Prizes will be awarded to entries judged to be correct by the editor.
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- Group, their printers, distributors 5. The entry instructions form
  - 6. All entries become the property
  - 7. All entries much reach us by February 28th, 1987.
  - 8. The rules form the condition of

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## Gamer Februar

..... My name for the city is .....

I agree to abide by the rules of the competition.

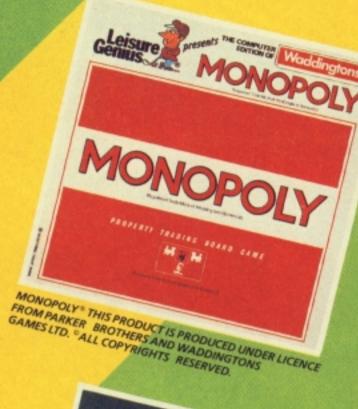






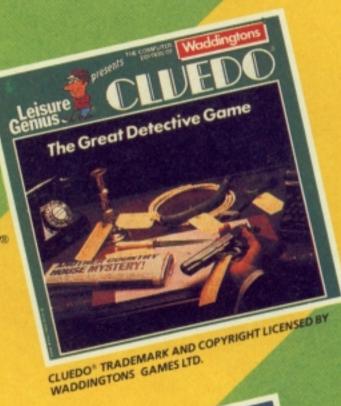
## SHEER GENIUS

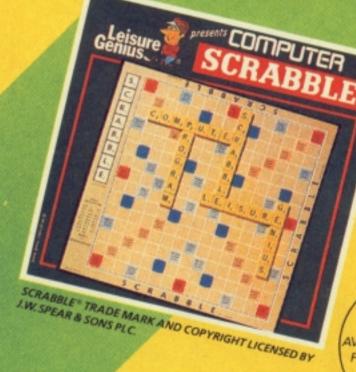
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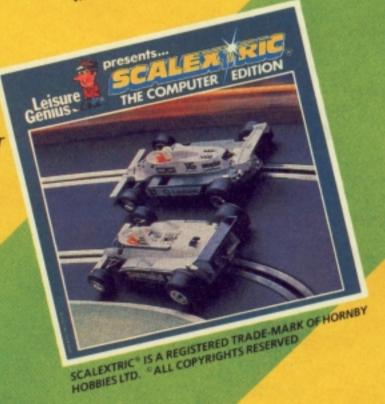


You can play all these classic games with friends, or select computer opponents. Each game uses the capabilities of the computer to enhance the games as much as possible, a large dictionary incorporated in SCRABBLE, lap timers in SCALEXTRIC and the computer even rolls the dice for you in MONOPOLY.

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## NEMEZEKE KANTAL light grappling greats of the American

West arrive on the computer screens to crunch, mangle and maim their opponents in an attempt to win the World Wrestling Title.

The contenders for the title are the biggest, baddest bruisers of professional wrestling who know all of the 25 regulation wrestling moves and a customised one of their own. You can play any of these gripping grapplers in either a practise bout or against the computer. You can also arrange a knockout tournament for up to eight humans to decide who is the King of the

Before each bout the screen is dominated by a close-up of the combatants as they snarl their motto (in wrestling terms this means threat). These range from the subtle 'I'll rip off your ears and feed 'em to ya!' (K.C. Colussus)

SCORE **3 : U U** SCORE 000 H.C. Colossus H. Manslayer

to the incredibly meaningful 'Haaarggh! Oooorowrrr ... KILLL!' (The Beserker).

Then its into the ring for the three minute bout. The scene is set for the match as a capacity crowd prepares to hurl support, abuse and bottles at the grunting grapplers as they pummel each other into submission.

The contest is scheduled for a full three minutes but since only one fall is required to win it's usually all over within the first twenty seconds.

Your first opponent is usually an Indian brave who's definitely on the war path. His motto 'Scalps? I'm talking heads!' should give an idea of what Howling Brave has in store for you. His custom move is the Bow and Arrow which is an incredibly painful arm twist and kick that will stake you out on the mat.

Obvious joystick moves control the actions that are structured so that you

Grab your partner for the latest sports simulation from US Gold.

Championship Wrestling Title:

Computer: C64

Supplier: **US** Gold

Price: £9.99

only have to move the stick in the usual four directions. The actual result depends on whether you are near your opponent, further away, have him in a headlock or if he's flat on the canvas.

It's best to start the bout with a few punches and kicks to soften up your opponent. These don't score very much but they weaken him enough to allow you to get close enough for the real bone-crushing blows. These also include the spectacular spin kick and flying drop kick that can land you in trouble if you miss. They're usually worth the risk as they score more points and can often prove to be the decisive blow.

Once you get your opponent in a headlock you can drop him on your knee for an atomic drop, hurl him across the ring in a body suplex or pick him up to take him for a spin. Then you can simply drop him on his head for some heavy duty demolition work known as the pile driver, get him nice and dizzy in an aeroplane spin before slamming him on the mat or throw him out of the ring and into the jeering crowd.

When he's flat out you can add to his misery and bruises by planting your leg into his face in a leg drop before going for the pin-fall.

You can add to the fun and your score by climbing onto the ropes to try a flying (turnbuckle) kick or punch. Get it right and you'll score heavily against a weakened opponent but if you miss you could be out for the count.

The strengths of both you and your opponent are shown as red bars in a display above the ring that also includes the clobbering time left in the bout and the comparative scores. Simple moves such as headlocks, punches and kicks score only a few points so you will have to inflict airplane spins, dropkicks and turnbuckle punches and kicks on your hapless opponent if you're going to impress the crowd.

To score big points you must complete your own custom move. This can only be attempted when your opponent is all but flattened and you're still

fighting fit. Then simply selecting a right headlock will produce a spectacular move resulting in a win and lots of points for you, cheers from the crowd and a headache for your opponent.

After you've tamed the brave, you can tackle the head butting Beserker, send the cow poke Zeke Weasel back home, hammer the hooded mystery man Zantoklaw, blast Colonel Rooski the Ruski, beat the purple haired Prince Vicious, stack the ghetto blasting Purple Hays and finally earth the electrifying K.C. Colossus.

Your fight continues from opponent to opponent until you either cream them all or are finally flattened. Then if your score is good enough it's recorded as a World Record.

It is inevitable that Championship Wrestling will have to grapple with Melbourne House's Rock 'N Wrestle to see which grabs the grappling groupies.

I found Championship Wrestling to be the easier game to play and graphically more impressive. Championship bouts are dominated by kicking moves and then usually finished off by a spin. In Rock 'N Wrestle the head butt (missing from Championship Wrestling) produces results against ten (that's two more) opponents. Championship Wrestling also allows tournament play between eight humans and also features a World Record table of the top eight scores and a custom move for each competitor. Rock 'N Wrestle more than makes up for this with two more wrestlers, a bopping sound track to pummel your opponent to and more wrestling moves, including the head butt and bonecrushing backbreaker.

All things considered the result could only be a draw between two outstanding games that are far better than the sport they simulate.

## SCORELINE

Impact Originality Gameplay

859 909

**OVERALL** 

X-Factor

88%



## Fancy a game of chess? Gordon Hamlett checks out the latest

f you feel like giving the aliens a miss at the moment, perhaps you ought to consider exercising your grey cells a bit. Three different chess games have just been released, two for the C64 and one for the BBC series.

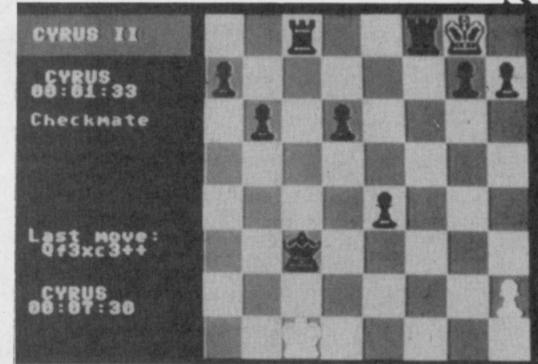
Cheapest of the three is Master Chess from Mastertronic for the C64. It is far and away the cheapest of the three versions at only £1.99 but none the worse for that. As you might expect at that price though, some of the features available on more expensive models are missing.

The number of different skill levels available to you is as many as you care to choose from as at the start of the game, you input the number of seconds that you are going to allow the computer to analyse its next move. The suggestion is that you start from about thirty seconds and work your way up but if you are an absolute beginner, then shorter

presentation is average and the only other features available are save game and the ability to set up a position.

Also for the C64 is Cyrus II from Alligata. The first thing to say about Cyrus II is that it has by far the best on screen presentation of any chess game that I have seen. Forget 3-D, it tends to hinder rather than help you play. The pieces are large and clear and there is no problem at all distinguishing between king and queen, bishop and pawn.

There are nine skill levels to choose from ranging from a three second to three minutes response time. Other features not available on Master Chess include a demo mode and the facility to play against a fellow human should you get fed up of the computer beating you. If you discover that your master plan has gone astray, then you can step back through as many moves as you desire. You can also



Colossus Chess 4 is for the Electron, BBC B/+/Master although the full range of features only appears on the latter two models.

A results panel in the instruction booklet shows the outcome of sixteen games against a whole range of other chess programs. Colossus 4's worst result was an II-5 victory! An incredible 15 of the 21 matches were won 16-0. In a match against Cyrus II (Amstrad version), Colossus won 13-3. Its estimated ELO rating it 1850+.

The game also features a host of features not found in the other games. There are thousands of skill levels to be selected from and you can choose from a whole range of initial parameters if you wish to do so. The computer guesses what move you are about to make and thinks at the same time as you on that basis allowing for deeper analysis. You can display all legal moves for a given piece, replay a game, choose a mode that tries to match your skill and even play invisible chess!

The only thing that lets Colossus down is its presentation. The 3-D representation of the pieces is not particularly clear and the method of changing to a 2-D mode is not very easy being well obscured in the instruction manual. Also included in the disk version is a selection of games featuring computers and a number of problems for you to try and solve. Colossus 4 is also available for other formats but not all the features mentioned above may be present.

All the above games assume a prior konwledge of chess and I am surprised that no-one has packaged program, especially as CDS did just that with their recently released Colossus Bridge.

Which one you buy depends on your needs but if you are in the least bit serious about the game, there is no real choice. It has to be Colossus 4.

			HASTER CHESS
X		I BE	26 C5-C6
2		X	27 E1XA1 A7-A6
	1		28 A1-D1 H8-G8 29 D1-D7
			30 D7XC7 C8-D8
			31 F4-E5 68-66
			FROM: ?
		H	

times may be advisable (the editor came in crowing because he beat it on a pathetic 10s, but then he still has trouble remembering which colour he is). (There goes your payment this month — Ed).

The main problem is that the computer will take its full allotment of time for each move, which can be frustrating in the opening stages. In theory, you can press return at any stage to force a move but this did not work on my version. Entering moves is by algebraic notation only. On screen,

ask for a hint if you are really desperate although there is no guarantee that the move suggested will be the best one available! Moves are entered by moving a cursor around the board using either keyboard or joystick. There is a comprehensive set up position facility. Cyrus II is a stronger player than Master Chess and much better presented but you are paying considerably more for it.

The last of the programs to be reviewed is by far the strongest of the three currently on offer. a book for beginners with the

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X-Factor Value	80% 85%
OVERALL	80%
OVERALL	30 %



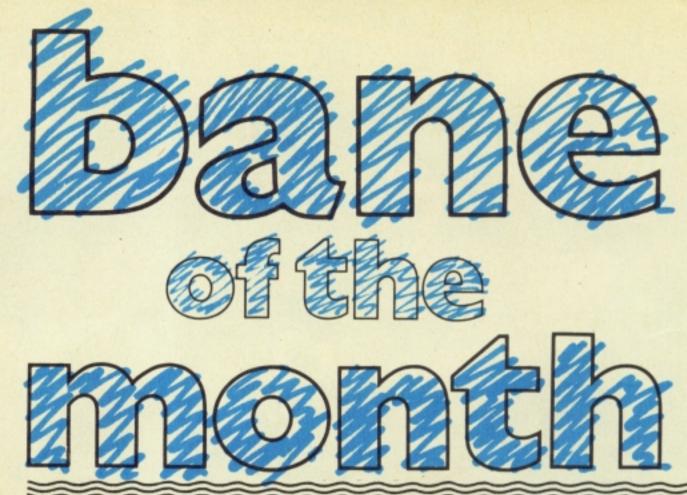


## Roll up all you sexist MCPs as Gordon Hamlett lays bare Strip Poker

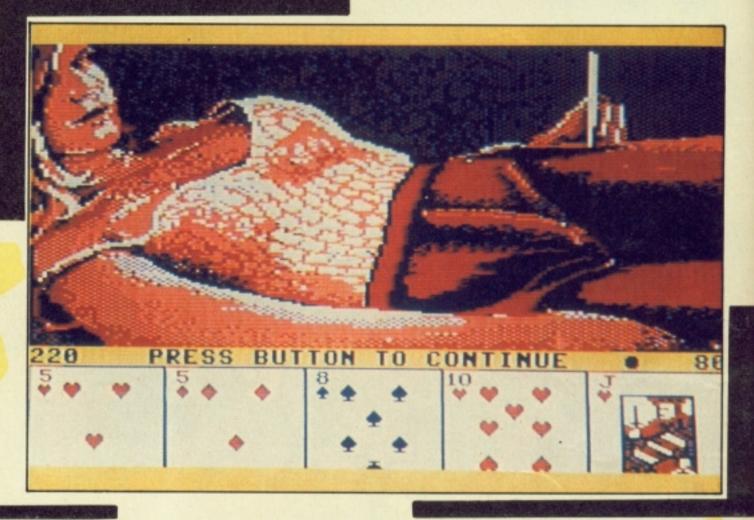
udge nudge, wink wink. Fancy a game of strip poker? You know, that game you used to play at school when the bike shed was out of bounds. Perhaps you never got invited to join in that sort of game. If not, and you happen to own a Plus 4, here's your chance to find out what you've been missing. In case you're now getting all hot under the collar, I'll let you into a little secret. The answer is: not a lot. Well, not from the game anyway.

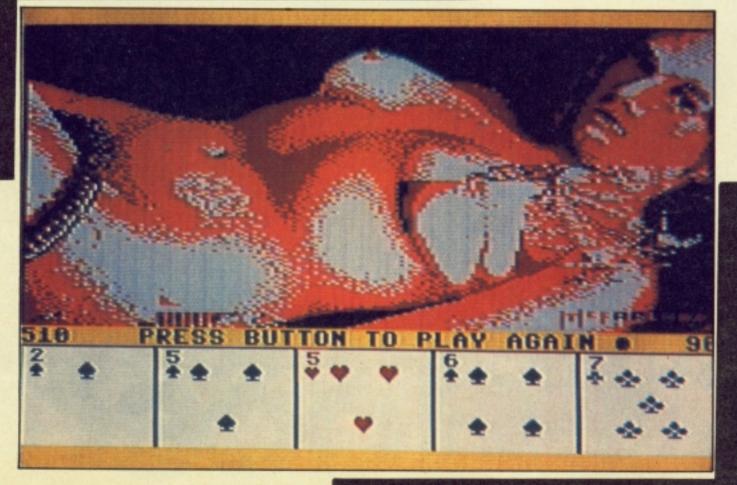
The two ladies who invite you to discover what they're made of are Suzi and Melissa and you must select one at the start of the game. The lass in question starts off with \$100. Should you manage to relieve her of her money, she will borrow another hundred at the cost of one item of clothing. The game is five card draw poker. An initial ante, betting based on your original hand, change as many cards as you want and try to improve your hand, another round of betting and the final showdown.

The girls are supposed to play in their own individual styles but I didn't have time to discover what this style was as it only took me a total of twenty minutes to totally disrobe both of them. This included reloading the game because, once you have beaten one of the girls, you cannot select the other. Let it be said as well that I am not a good poker player — I know the rules and that's about it. Twenty minutes to finish a game suggests that the playability is just ever so slightly wrong.



Title: Computer: Supplier: Strip Poker Plus 4 Anco





So, the crunch question. What are the pictures like? There are five digitised images for each young lady and the best way to describe them is to imagine Page 3 of the Sun — smudged! They are about as erotic as a wet weekend in Sheffield, although the fact that I was sitting there dressed in hat, overcoat, scarf, gloves and half a dozen jumpers just in case I lost could have had something to do with it! Seriously though, if you must get your jollies this way, go and buy a copy of Playboy. The women are still plastic but at least you can see exactly what it is you're missing.

=======================================	~~~
SCORELINE	
Impact	45%
Originality	30%
Gameplay	20%
X-Factor	30%
OVERALL	31%

# duffers

Title: Computer: Supplier: Price: Konami's Golf Spectrum Imagine £8.95

Golf seems to be the in game at the moment. After a spate of simulations on the C64, it is now the Spectrum's turn to ready clubs for battle. First up to the tee is Konami's Golf.

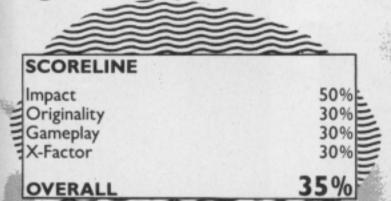
The screen is divided into three main area. A small box, top right gives details of the scores. Underneath that is a map of the hole and to the left, the main box shows the course just as the golfer would see it. Playing a shot is dead easy. You select whether you want to play straight or deliberately hook or slice the ball. A cursor is then moved to the direction in which you want to hit it. Your club is selected and then it is simply a matter of waiting for a constantly moving power indicator to reach the desired level and pressing fire to execute your shot.

You must avoid landing out of bounds which to all intents and purposes is anywhere on the course depicted as forest. Landing there results in penalty strokes being awarded against you. You must also take the wind into account although its effect is fairly minimal.

Once on the green, your putter is automatically selected. Little arrows lie all over the green making it look like a sheet of material as used in prisoners' suits but they are actually for a purpose and are used to indicate the slope of the green.

And that's all there is to it. The game is too easy to play and, with only nine holes, there is not enough to it. Not recommended.

Gordon Hamlett





Title: Computer: Supplier: Price: Jailbreak Amstrad Konami £7.95

Konamins the coin-op giant that has been licencing its games through Imagine/The Edge for a couple of years now, but has recently set up shop for itself. Jailbreak is the first result of their efforts, with games like Nemesis and Salamander to follow. However, looking at Jailbreak my hopes of seeing good conversions of these is rapidly fading.

The game is based on the coin-op Konami game of 18 months ago. You play a cop who, single handed, is trying to stop a mass breakout from the local nick. These escaped convicts wander across the screen shooting at you, taking hostages, and generally making a nuisance of themselves. Later on they get extra weapons and start taking over vehicles. You can get extra weapons (grenade launcher, bazooka etc.) to defend yourself against them as well.

The game worked well in the arcades because it was fairly simple, had detailed graphics, and was quite quick. The fashion at the time was also towards games of extreme violence and little gameplay. The present trend in computer games, however, is somewhat different to this. Because of this the game has an old feel to it. The mindless killing of yesterday's martial arts games comes to mind as the minimal gameplay gets more and more boring.

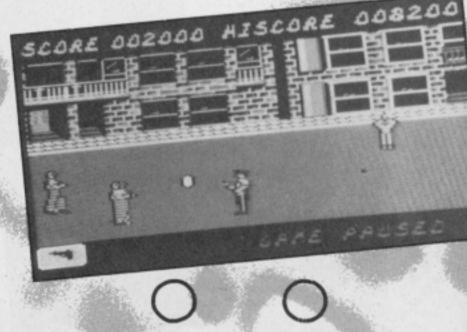
The Amstrad conversion is not inspiring, the small graphics jerk around the screen. The screen is smaller than normal to get the aspect right, and the medium resolution mode has been used — which means little colour. All in all an average conversion of a dated game. These go together to make the game not worth getting at all.

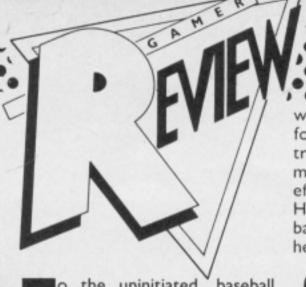
I don't normally comment on the packaging, but I'll make an exception in this case. It is the boring old standard Japanese way of packaging in a cardboard box that doesn't stack and doesn't fit in anywhere. It looks like something out of the old MSX days.

Mike Roberts

SCORELINE

OVERALL	30%
X-Factor	20%
Gameplay	25%
Originality	40% E
Impact	25%





he passes it.

called a home run and a 'homer'

fits of delight. What it means is

that the batter and any other men

already on the bases can walk

round the rest of the bases and all

score runs. So a home run is worth

between one and four runs de-

pending on how heavily the bases

tries to stop all this happening.

Their main weapon is the pitcher.

are packed with players.

with second and home bases, these Standing on a mound in the middle form the diamond. The batter of the diamond, he throws the ball tries to advance round the dia- at the batter at speeds of up to mond either through his own 100 mph hoping to induce some efforts or those of his colleagues. sort of mistake. Each pitcher will He does not have to stop at every have several different types of ball base but must touch each one as in his armoury. A fast ball is just plain fast and hopes to beat the

Is it true that every pitcher tells a story? Gordon Hamlett takes his place at first base.

o the uninitiated, baseball looks to be no more than a grown-up version of rounders and indeed, there are a lot of similarities between the two games. After the ball has been thrown (pitched), the batter tries to hit it and advance himself round the four posts (bases) in turn. Should he succeed in doing this, he scores one run for his side.

There are nine men on each team and the visiting side always bats first. A game consists of nine innings and each lasts until three men are out. If the scores are tied at the end of the nine innings, then there are extra innings until the match is resolved.

The batter must attempt to run to at least first base whenever he hits the ball legitimately. A fair hit means that the ball must be hit in front of the foul lines. These are lines which extend from the batter to first and third base. Together

No more than one batter can batter by sheer speed. With curve be on a particular base at any given balls, sinkers and the like, the ball time. The high spot in baseball is actually bends to varying degrees when the batter hits the ball right in the air so that the batter misjudges its trajectory. out of the playing area. This is

One other type of pitching is is guaranteed to send the fans into the old fashioned knuckle ball in which the ball is gripped in the knuckles rather than the fingers. Thrown this way, the ball's behaviour in the air is totally unpredictable.

## STRIKING OUT

A batter can be out in a variety of Naturally, the non-batting side ways. He can be caught on the full as in cricket. He is out if the ball is thrown to first base before he

gets there or if he is tagged by a fielder holding the ball when he is running from one base to another. Or he can be struck out.

The pitcher cannot throw the ball anywhere that he wants to. He is aiming for an area between the batter's knees and shoulders and over the home plate. If the pitcher hits this target area and the batter misses, this is called a strike. Three strikes and a batter is out. It is also a strike if the batter swings at any ball, regardless of where it is going and misses it. It is also a strike when the batter hits the ball but it goes behind the foul line but a batter cannot be struck out this way (it only counts as a first or second strike, not a third).

If the pitcher pitches outside the strike zone and the batter does not aim a swing, that is called a ball. Four balls and the batter is allowed to walk to first base. It is possible to get two or more men out in the same play (unlike cricket where only one batsman can be run out).

Other terms you may encounter are stealing a base, which is where a batter who is already partway round the diamond tries to run to the next base even though the batter has failed to hit the ball, and bunting.



This is where the batter, instead of taking an almighty swing at the ball, just taps it and runs. The object of this is to try and get as many men

onto the bases as possible. So, that in a nutshell is a brief idea of what baseball is about. It is not very complicated. It can't be if Americans play and understand

## THE COMPUTER GAME

This is the game that US Gold didn't think could be done. Hardball was originally a baseball simulation for the C64 and the powers that be in Birmingham decided that it was not possible to convert it to the Spectrum. Advance Software disagreed, signed up the rights and here it is. And every bit as good as the original it is too.

The game starts with you selecting your team. You are presented with a starting line up but can swap the batting order and substitute players as you see fit. As is typical with all American sports, there is an obsession with statistics and you are presented with a plethora of seemingly meaningless numbers, all of which give some average of other designed to show exactly how good, or bad, a par-

ticular player is. My advice, if you don't know very much about the game, is to ignore it all to start with. It is fun to play about with the statistics if you want to but you won't lose any enjoyment if you forget about them totally.

The main screen depicts the confrontation between pitcher and batter. Which man you control depends, not surprisingly on whether you are pitching or batting. Control of your character (keyboard or joystick) is determined from a series of options displayed at the top of the screen. Starting with the pitcher, he has four different types of ball available to him and your first job is to select which one of these you are going to throw. Each pitcher in your squad has different abilities and these might include fastballs, sinkers, sliders, curve and screwballs. You must then decide whereabouts you are going to aim high, low, left, right or straight. Don't fall into the trap of chickening out and throwing everything straight as you will find any curving ball going way out of the striking

That is all you have to do as pitcher. What happens next depends on what the batter does. If

he misses or is out, the details of the innings are updated (strikes, balls and outs) and you move onto the next pitch. If the batter hits the ball, the action switches to a second screen depicting the whole playing area. Control changes to the fielder nearest the ball (he flashes to let you know which one it is) and you try to manoeuvre him to (preferably) catch the ball or to pick it up. Once you have picked it up, you must decide which base to throw it to.

As batter, all you have to do is is out for the rest of the game. to press fire in order to take a swipe at the ball. True, you can also aim high, low, left and right but you have so little time to assess the path of the ball, it hardly seems worth the extra thought as by the time the old grey matter has told the arm to move the joystick up, the ball has long since passed. Much harder is deciding whether or not to hit the ball in the first place. Initially, the temptation is to swing at everything but you soon find yourself being struck out as you aim blows at balls round your

Before you signal to the pitcher that you are ready to receive, you can also decide whether to steal

a base or bunt. If you do hit the ball, the secondary screen appears again and you can decide if you want to advance any of your men over and above their normal running order.

The game continues like this until all nine innings have been completed and the match is over. You can change your line up throughout the game, substituting your pitcher when he gets tired although be warned, once you remove him from the line up, he

One of the nicest things about Hardball is that the computer plays a good but not impossible game. OK, you will probably lose at first but you will not be outclassed and the thrill of hitting your first home run is tremendous (in one rival baseball simulation, I lost my first match 64-0. I have not played that game since!). The animation is excellent and you don't have to be a baseball fan to enjoy the game although I suspect that as a lot of people will have been watching the World Series on Channel 4 retoes that you could never have hit cently, they will be itching to have a go. A great game, highly recommended.





MACLEMATER AND ENDOSEDED AND ENDOSEDED AND ENDOSED AND			
Game	System	Scorer	Score
Action Biker	C64	Richard Ewart	258920
Action Biker	Atari	Nigel Clarke	237462
Hyper Sports	Spectrum	David Stein	415980
Hyper Sports	C64	Sigurd Winsnes	139842
Pole Position	Atari	Dominic Anderson	136650
Pole Position	BBC	David Brown	123350
Elite	BBC	Robert Booth	214748364
Elite	Electron	Craig Burbridge	1100476
Elite	C64	Jason Kennedy	428957315
Elite	Spectrum	Barry Dyson	431316.7
Who Dares Wins II	C64	Julian Bryant	112550
Who Dares Wins II	Spectrum	Shaun Bowes	410850
Raid Over Moscow	C64	Adrian Watson	423300
Raid Over Moscow	Spectrum	Mark Henley	672650
Zaxxon	Atari	Simon Jones	199130
	C64		2456200
Zaxxon		Mathew Taylor	
Exploding Fist	C64	Douglas Sinclair	417500
Exploding Fist	Spectrum	Robert McKane	853200
Exploding Fist	Amstrad	Chris Rasteiro	94800
Yie Ar Kung Fu	C64	Jeff Barber	20096400
Yie Ar Kung Fu	Amstrad	Robert Montgomery	35023000
Yie Ar Kung Fu	Spectrum	Paul Mahon	2750000
Yie Ar Kung Fu	BBC	Peter Lipscombe	809900
Commando	C64	Steve McDonald	9507500
Commando	Spectrum	Freyr Kolbeinsson	17163150
Commando	Amstrad	Justin Brown	141450
Rambo	C64	Sven-Arne Reinemo	2129800
Hunter Patrol	C64	John Watson	132350
Gyruss	C64	Christopher Brown	374900
Gyruss	Atari	Michael Cameron	378450
The Eidolon	Atari	Aaron Hardwick	19499
Bombjack	Spectrum	Michael Brown	1436230
Bombjack	Amstrad	Jostein Rortveit	1275420
Paradroid NOMAD	C64	Rick Oberoi	54470
	Amstrad	Neil Fenton	2500
Fractalus	Atari	Martin Craven	220723
Green Beret	Spectrum	Mark Robertson	129800
Green Beret	C64	Neil White	78200
Green Beret	Amstrad	Loucas Thomas	7682000
ACE	C64	lan Grimney	16910
ACE	Spectrum	Richard Dunseith	111550
Dragon's Lair	C64	Wayne Ingold	230098
Uridium	C64	Morten Nielsen	1263820
Ghosts and Goblins	C64	Lee Markham	501150
Druid	C64	Graham Jones	Light Master
Slamball	C64	Neil White	1596310
Alternate Reality	Atari	Christopher Beard	889432(exp)
Fist II	C64	Alistair Evans	186800
Kane	Amstrad	Andrew Newsham	32014
Xevious	Spectrum	Mike Roberts	51860
Avenger	Amstrad	Mike Roberts	36%

Velcome to our on-going hiscore competition. A bit of a change in style this month, despite people sending in photographs to prove their score, we are still receiving one or two dubious scores a month (most of which we weed out). So as of this month you are required to send in a detailed 'hint' of a high level in the game. This serves two purposes — to prove your claim, and to help other players.

The best hints will be printed, and the best hint of all each month will

receive a prize.

Also we are going to start printing photographs of you, so when you send in a high score, as well as attaching your hint, you should attach a passport sized photograph of your 'orrible visage. We prefer monochrome, but good quality colour will do. If you want the pic returned, remember to include an SAE, and put your name on the hints as well as the back of the photograph, if you want the hints to be published then we prefer them typed with wide margins and double spaced between lines. All entries, as usual, to:

Computer Gamer
Hi-Scores
Argus Specialist Publications
I Golden Square
London WIR 3AB

Full Name:
Address:
Telephone:
Age:
Game:
Score:
Machine:
Signed:
Witness:
February 1987

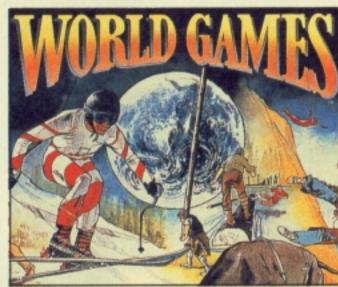


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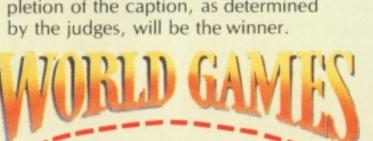


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#### **Runners-up Prizes**

The 25 runners-up will each receive copies of Supercycle and Winter Games for either the CBM 64/128, Spectrum or Amstrad.

#### RULES.

This competition is open to all residents of the U.K. except employees of U.S. Gold Limited, CentreSoft Limited and their associated companies, families and agencies.

The prizes stated will be awarded to the entrant who completes the questions correctly and in the event of a tie break, complete the caption in the most apt and original way.

 The winning entrant will receive two air tickets to Rome hotel accommodation for one week, two tickets for the world championships, plus £100 spending money, 25 runners up will each receive copies of Supercycle and Winter Games for

her the C64/128, Spectrum or Amstrad.

Proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of delivery.

Entries altered, illegible or not completed in accordance the the rules of entry requirements will be disqualified.

All entries must be on an official entry form.
 'How to enter' forms part of the rules. All entries become the property of U.S. Gold and cannot be returned.

It is a condition of entry that the competitors agree to be bound over by the rules.

9. The closing date for receipt of all entries is 31st March 1987. The prizewinners will be notified by post. The names of the winners will be available to those sending a S.A.E. marked 'World Games Competition' to the address below. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

11. The competition entry should consist of six answered questions, three on the entry form and three included in the packaging of the game and are to be forwarded to:



**RUNNERS-UP** PRIZES.

Complete the questions and caption below together with the completed questions from the packaging and return to the address below. All entries must be received no later than 31st March 1987

Ouestion 1. How many hills is Rome built on .....

Question 2. In what year was the Roman invasion of Britain ..... Question 3. Who painted the renowned ceiling of the Sistine Chapel

Rome is an appropriate venue for the World Games because Caption (complete in not more than 25 words)



Age ...... Address .....

Tel: ...... My computer is a ......



# games whose effects have been felt far beyond the limits of high tension action

Hewson's latest twin pack offers two

\_\_\_\_\_ Paradroid/Uridium -Title: Computer: Commodore 64

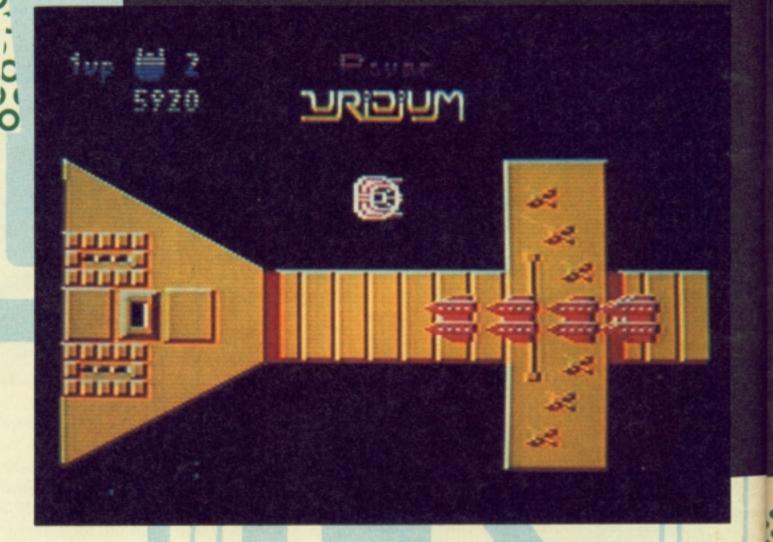
Supplier: Hewson O (Price:

000000000

aradroid and Uridium were landmarks of graphic perfection on the Commodore 64 and their realistic 3D images have been copied but never bettered. Acknowledging that times have changed since their first release, Hewson have allowed the programmers to rework their masterpieces to produce one of the best bargains of the decade.

don't wish to sound disparaging when I say that one of the best parts of the new, Paradroid is the loading screen. Andrew Braybrook has grasped the opportunity to show what can be done to relieve the boredom of still-shot loaders. For Paradroid, we are presented with a threatening silhouette of three flashing-eyed droids collected around a console with flickering status indicators. As the load procedes, the monotonous electronic sounds which accompany the scene are punctuated with the crackling of an electrical storm. The resultant lightning flashes detail onto the screen of three very solid looking droids, a visual symphony of light and shade.

The game fulfils the promise of the loader and stretches the meaning of a mind game to its ultimate definition The Paradroid is an 'influence device' which can lock onto and control any droid. The para is only employed in extreme cases of droid manual over-ride. Such an occassion is the current mutiny on a galactic space freighter. The para has been sent in to quell the uprising by

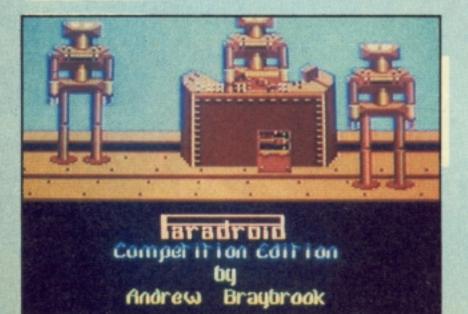


control and elimination of the malfunctioning machines.

A standard para has two low-power lasers for defence but these are no match for the powerful higher grades of droid on the freighter. Fortunately the parasitic nature of the control device allows it to take over the powerful droids and utilise their weaponry in the destruction of the mutineers.

Control is established by negating the microcircuitry of the droid but the power you can send depends on the current status of your para's host. Each droid has a place in the heirarchy dependant on its numerical class, the higher the number it carries, the more the pulses that may be

Such a system has the obvious drawback that the lower the grade of your para, the less likely that an assault on a powerful droid will succeed. Crafty paradroid controllers will soon learn that the best way to jump up the heirarchy is



struggle has a side effect of eventually destroying the host (as with most parasitic infestations). On colliding with a potential host the computer screen changes to show a circuit board. Various pathways connect with a central panel of LED's and the idea is to light up or extinguish the majority of them by pulsing a charge through the correct

Which side of the panel you wish to control is your first choice and you must ascertain the most advantageous side within a few seconds. Some pathways split in two, some have advantageous pulser units or disadvantageous phase inverters. The amount of pulses which

to attack a high-grade droid and wait until the pulse exchange time limit is almost exhausted. With a bit of luck you will be able to pass enough pulses to overcome the host but failure results in total anihilation of your device and the

failure of the mission.

to its ultimate definition.

... stretches the meaning of a mind game's

The freighter is displayed in plan view, deck by deck. Some decks are populated by low-grade maintenance and messenger droids, other decks have a strong contingent of battle droids with powerful armaments. As each level is cleared of droids, the automatic energy conservation systems on the ship will power down that level and indicate that this has occured by a darkening of the

# PARADROLD

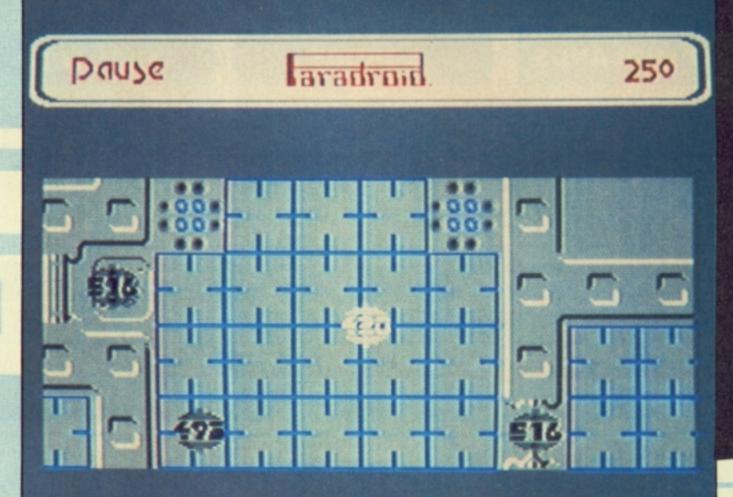
colour. The order in which you attack each level is entirely up to you.

Old campaigners will be pleased to learn that the new Paradroid is faster than the original game. The messenger droids fairly zip along and the net effect is a greater challenge than the original game.

Uridium has a similar scenario of drama in deep space. Enemy Super-Dreadnoughts have been placed in orbit around fifteen planets in the galactic sector. Each S-D requires a different mineral for its intersteller power units and these minerals are being sucked up at an alarming rate.

Using a Manta Class Space Fighter you are transported to each planet in turn to overcome the S-D's formidable cloak of fighters and eventually destroy the ship and recover as many fuel rods as possible.

Once more the Hewson graphics reign supreme, chiaroscuro effects create realistic 3D images of the Super-Dreadnoughts and their protective fighters. The animation of the Manta is brilliantly conceived and executed, adding up to a deluxe shoot-em-up without parellel.



and a must for any 64 owner's collection. Even if you've played your old versions into the ground, the new ones on this tape breathe new life into the old games.

Other companies should take note of the complete approach to added functions which is contained in both games. Especially worthy of note is the

## Wave upon wave of alien craft must be eliminated

From the onset the action is hot but the S-D's are relatively uncomplicated. Wave upon wave of alien craft must be eliminated as they patrol the scrolling surface of the dreadnought. Various aerials and shields protrude upwards towards the TV screen and block the pathway of the Manta so pilots must perform an airborne slalom as they persue the alien craft.

Some of the dreadnought's surface features can be destroyed for higher scores and when the titanic craft has been beaten into submission you are invited to land on the master runway to embark on the second phase of your mission.

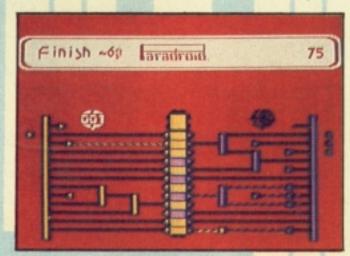
The second part is a fairly straightforward reaction game. A pyramid appears on the screen and horizontally juxtaposed box pairs flash alternately. One box has a value of recovered rods and the other box contains the word QUIT. Pressing the fire button to stop the alternation when the rod value is highlighted is the aim of this game. As the values get higher the alternation speeds up making it more and more difficult to avoid quitting unintentionally.

When you complete this you have one last run at any remaining surface targets

which you missed in the first assault, as the dreadnought disintegrates before your theme eyes.

What Hewson's did was to take the tried and tested genre of the shoot-emup and add extra depth and superb graphics to create a whole new dimension to a hackneyed theme.

Once more the compilation version differs from the original game by having new dreadnought layouts to challenge the newcomer or the battle-hardened expert.

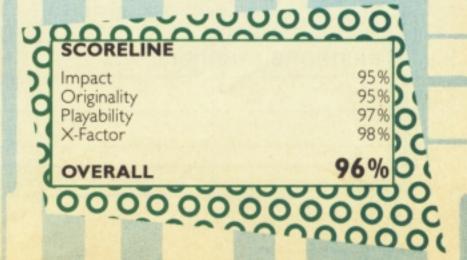


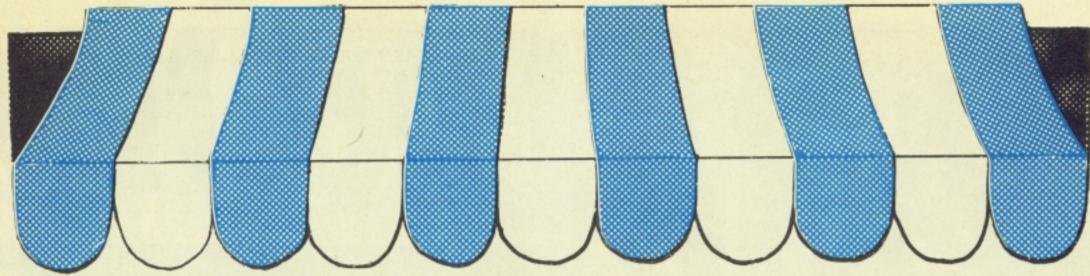
If the Gamer Gold award had existed when the original versions of these games had been released, then both would already sport this accolade. This makes the combined version doubly desirable

## a whole new dimension to a hackneyed theme

monochrome mode. Not every computer owner has the advantage of a colour TV and some games are rendered unplayable without chromatic differentiation and my photographer would like to thank both programmers for the pause modes which make his life bearable!

I know that there is something new in the Hewson pipeline which will hopefully be as innovative as these games but, to tide you over until that appears, dash out and buy this or live in envy of your friends.





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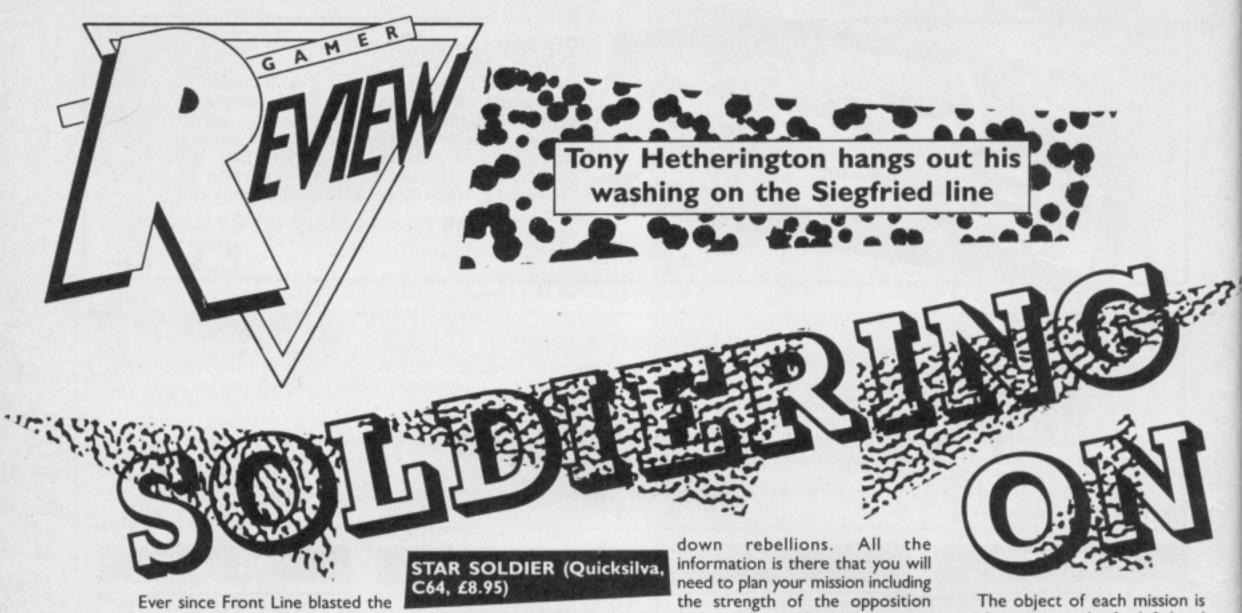
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arcades with real shoot-em-up action, software houses have tried the odds" heroism.

inspired Alligata's obviously unofficial Who Dares Wins II and Ocean's official Rambo — which was Commando but with additional weapons. Each game featured a lone hero armed to the box full of grenades.

Meanwhile, Ocean also released the official computer version of Green Beret featuring solo soldier action only in 2D rather than Commando's 3D.

Since then countless raw recruits have been trained and paraded. Can the latest platoon of soldier shoot-em-ups stand the test of the battlefield?

Ouicksilva's Star Soldier takes the basic Commando idea to it's limits. to recreate that "one man against It casts you as a galactic mercenary who must battle his way through Elite licenced the computer a staggering 100 scenarios to earn version of Commando which also enough money to buy some decent weapons.

Using your available credits you must arm yourself with as many grenades, smart bombs, explosives and energy packs that you can afford and the biggest gun that you teeth with a machine gun and a can carry. Then you literally head for the stars.

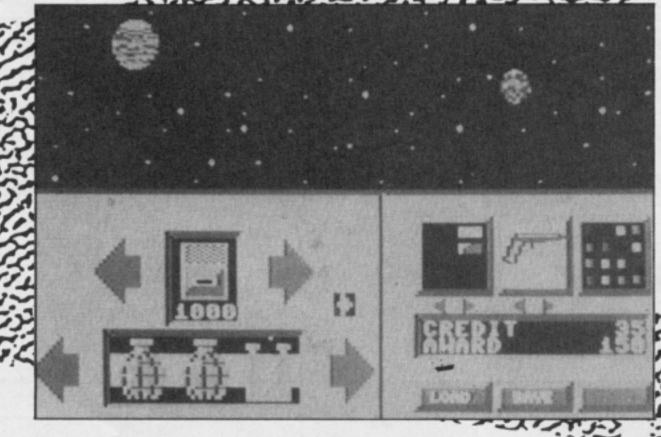
> Your computer allows you to punch up the information on any of the planets in the system as well as the appropriate job that needs special services. These range from retiring space pirates to putting

(ranges from the encouraging "non-existent" to the worrying "Elite") and the rate of pay for the job. This is represented as a multiple of your present rate which depends on your level. You can buy an increase in level for 1000 credits but since your starting rate is only 100 this could take some time. Nothing is free in Star Soldier. Even saving the game costs you 500!

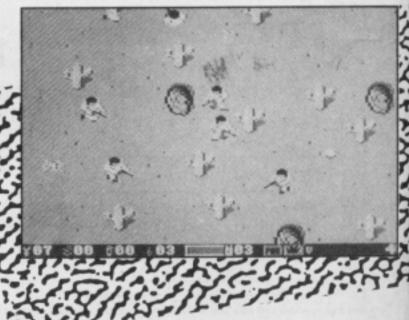
In the mission you're on your own against swarms of enemy troops. The terrain varies with scenario from the decks of a spaceship complete with automatic gun emplacements to jungle scenes with bridges spanning great rivers. simply to get to the far left hand end while avoiding as many of the enemy energy sapping bullets as possible. Everytime you're hit you lose about half of one energy cell. Lose them all and your game comes to an abrupt end.

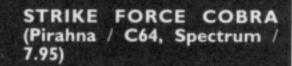
Blasting the enemy not only earns you credits but also a bonus in the objects they leave behind. These include bonus credits, energy hotspots to refuel your cells and temporary shields to you in battle. protect Unfortunately, you can also lose energy as some are booby trapped.

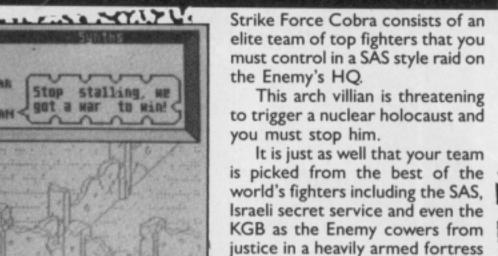
As the difficulty of the mission increases you'll have to face more and more enemy troops until you have to weave your way through a snow storm of bullets just to survive. If things get too desperate you can always beam yourself back to base with a warp drive - but at a cost.



-	-	
-	SCORELINE	
-	Impact	95%
1000	Originality Gameplay	85%
	Gameplay	90%
100	X-Factor	90%
29	OVERALL	90%
- 1	A STREET WORK	AMONOPHIA (







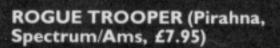
Each team member is armed with a light weight sub-machine

electronic traps.

protected by human guards, killer robots, automatic weapons and gun and supply Electromagnetic Flux Grenades (EFG) to destroy and distract the robots.

Using the joystick you must guide your team through the fortress level by level until you reach the Enemy himself. This isn't easy and each team member will need all his shooting, throwing, diving and kicking skills just to stay alive.

	07
SCORELINE	
Impact	70%
Originality	75%
Gameplay	65%
X-Factor	75%
OVERALL	70%
Originality Gameplay X-Factor	75 65



Rogue Trooper is a development of a cross between a Commando game and Knight Lore where the 2000AD comic book hero scours a 3D landscape looking for the video evidence to convict the traitor that caused the ambush that wiped out his buddies. These buddies are now retained as chips in his backpack, gun and helmet and yell encouragement to Rogue to stir him on to greater deeds.

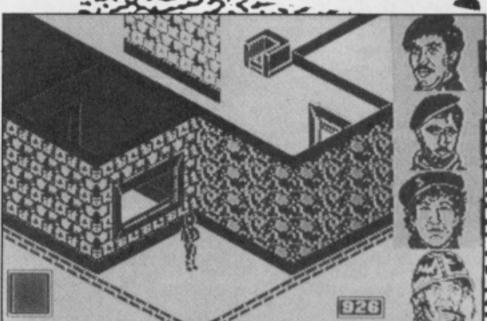
Nu-Earth is crawling with Norts that must be blasted before they get a shot at you. As you explore the desolate radioactive world you may find medikits to patch up your wounds and boxes

of extra ammo among the ruins, or norts and autofiring pillboxes.

Stop stalling,

Once you've collected all eight vidtapes you can return to your ship, bring the traitor to justice and reconstitute your enthusiastic chip buddies back into genetic infantrymen.

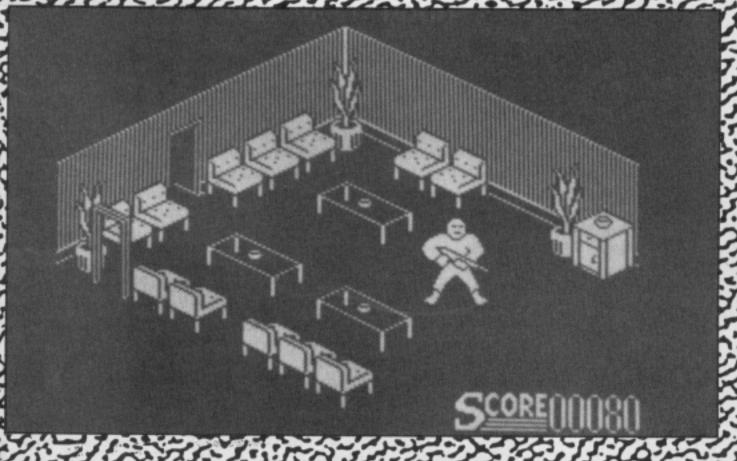
	W 414	-	W	-	4
	SCORELINE				
	Impact			85%	慮
	Originality			80%	
	Gameplay			75%	
	X-Factor			80%	
b	OVERALL			80%	-



OPERATION THUNDERFLASH (Super Sparklers / Spec/ £2.99)

You play Rock Hardman who leads a single handed embassy assault to rescue the hostages in a game promising "excellent 3D graphics" and "outstanding gameplay". Unfortunately, it has neither.

The graphics are wooden and the gameplay is so restricted that our SAS hero can only move and fire in four directions. The result is ridiculous, as Rock and a terrorist can stand next to each other and still can't shoot each other. Once you solve that problem you've only got 49 rooms to go. I doubt you'll bother.



١.		
	SCORELINE	1
	Impact	30%
	Originality	35%
1	Gameplay	25%
	X-Factor	30%
	OVERALL	30%
Ī	Me	200



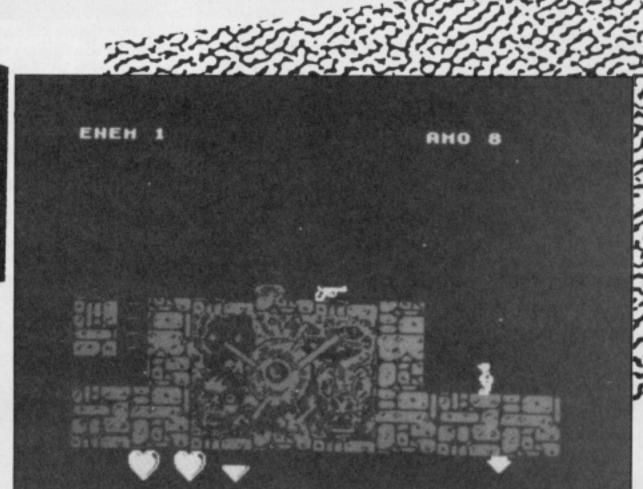
### THEY CALL ME TROOPER (CRL / Spectrum 128k / £8.95)

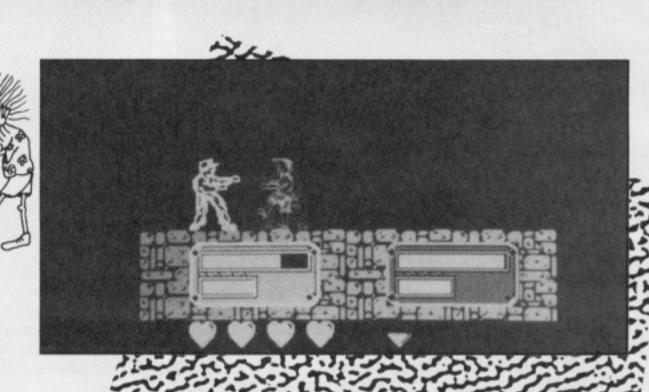
Finally CRL's 128K game They Call me Trooper defies description as it appears to be a cross between a poor kung-fu game and an ancient platform game.

Our 8 pixel hero leaps around a blocky landscape searching for pieces of his ship while fighting off the bad guys by punching and kicking them in appalling kung-fu sequences.

It's hard to imagine why this game needs 128K or why anyone would want to play it.

	70-7	
1	SCORELINE	
1	Impact	15%
	Originality	25%
	Gameplay	30%
9	X-Factor	30%
1	OVERALL	25%







#### BAZOOKA BILL (Melbourne House / C64 /£8.95)

Meanwhile, the 2D Green Beret style of game is fighting fit thanks to a hero called Bazooka Bill. His job is to save the President who has been captured by an unknown enemy.

As you play the game you'll discover that this enemy seem to have enough men, planes and helicopters to take on America and the President, and they're all out to get you.

Armed only with your trusty self-repeating fist you tackle these massed hordes taking them out by the 100 to gain you extra lives. On the way you may find ranged weapons such as a self-repeating knife, gun and finally a bazooka.

Once you've worked out how to stop yourself from running around in circles (if you stay on the bottom of two levels you just run round and round the same building) you might reach an airport when you can dogfight with a skyful of enemy aircraft and finally find the President.

1	-	
1	SCORELINE	
	Impact Originality Gameplay X-Factor	65% 65% 55% 55%
	OVERALL	60%
		ALL Y





elcome to the Hypa Bowl arena for the Hypa Ball Cup Final of the future sponsored by Odin and British Telecom. Their latest game is also the greatest to come from the company for a long time and yet it's such a simple concept that it deserves to be a

Down beneath the arena the tension in the dressing room is at fever pitch as the managers choose their teams for the match. The gladiators wait to don their Hypasuits for the battle royal which is to follow but who will take the field for the great day? Will it be the sly, old fox Norman Bates or the very youthful John Machine? Maybe the evenly talented Norce Codine or the weak but fast and agile Won Tin Ling.

The selection pool contains ten potential champions but only six will play in the match, three per side. The menu screen shows all of the candidates and awaits you, the manager of the Hawks, to make the first choice. As the cursor is moved over each player in turn, his vial statistics are shown on the data area. Name, age, height and weight are given above bar charts displaying strength, agility and speed.

For those unfamiliar with the requirements of a Hypa Ball champion, a little explanation is necessary. The trio which make up a side are the two strikes and a grounder. Strikes wear anti-gray

suits which allow them to float through the air above the pitch while the grounder remains on the turf beneath. The pitch is set up on either side of the central pole upon which the goal continually moves up and down. At the edges of the screen are force fields which limit the players to their side of the pole and hyperspaces the ball from one side to the other.

There are three players on each side of the pole, two from one team and one from the other. The ball floats through space and each side must race to gain possession and pass the ball until they reach a position from which they can

freezes in position and must make Strike 2 and Grounder. a pass or attempt a goal within a few seconds. Failure to get rid of choice even if the Vipers are not the ball results in a penalty for the opposing team and this usually results in a goal. Grounders can only reach the ball when it bounces off the turf but the opposing strikes battle it out in the air, blocking and passing to try to gain a clear shot at goal.

The ball is passed between the strikes by throwing it away from the goal post, towards the force field. From here the ball hypas to the other side of the pitch and continues in the same trajectory until it is either caught or it bounces off the top or bottom of the pitch or riccochets off the goal

The final is always between the three each side of the post. A

Vipers and the Hawks and we rejoin the selection process under the Hypa Bowl. The players are all young men with the exception of Alex Grunt, 37, Fergie Fuzle, 43, and Norman Bates, the granddaddy of them all at 54.

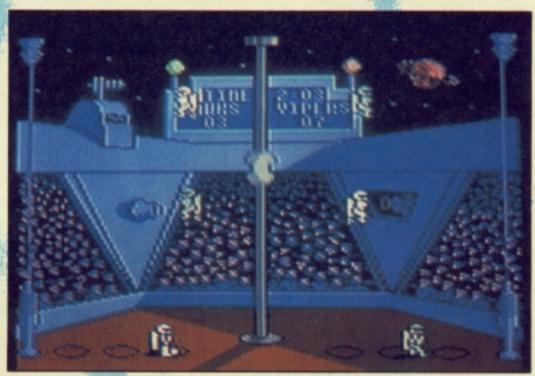
Despite the balding head and brutish features of John Machine, his age is given as only five years old in my programme. I think the clue to this enigma is in his surname!

All players vary in their key attributes of strength, agility and speed, so it is up to the manager to decide which positions need the most favourable spread. Selection

strike and the grounder of one team sandwiching the remaining strike of the opposition. The ball is served and the battle for possession begins.

The computer plays a really mean game and appears to get better as your game improves. I've never managed to win through against it, the newspaper headline displayed at the end of the match always displaying the Vipers mssive win. The encouraging thing is that each time I seem to reduce the margin by which I'm beaten so there's hope for me yet.

The only tactics which I can suggest are to keep your eye on



As a player catches the ball, he is taken in the order Strike I,

The Hawks always have first under computer control in the two player game.

After selection, we rejoin the tense atmosphere of the arena where the crowd are whipped into a frenzy of anticipation by the appearance of the pom-pom waving cheerleaders. Rising up from the bowels of the earth, the girls go through their routine and then sink back beneath the sward. The crowd know that the start of the game is imminent and the next time the lifts rise they carry the besuited gladiators ready for battle.

The players then take up their positions, one above the other, the ball, always go for possession and get rid of the ball as soon as possible (never give away a penalty it always means a goal to the opposition).

The game is hard, fast and great fun yet such a simple concept. This could be Odin's biggest seller to

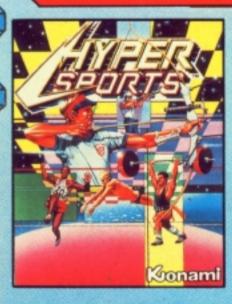
SCORELINE	
Impact Originality Playability X-Factor	80% 99% 95% 95%
OVERALL	92%

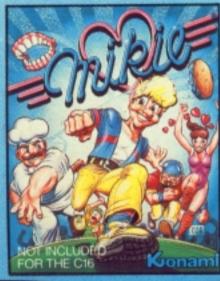


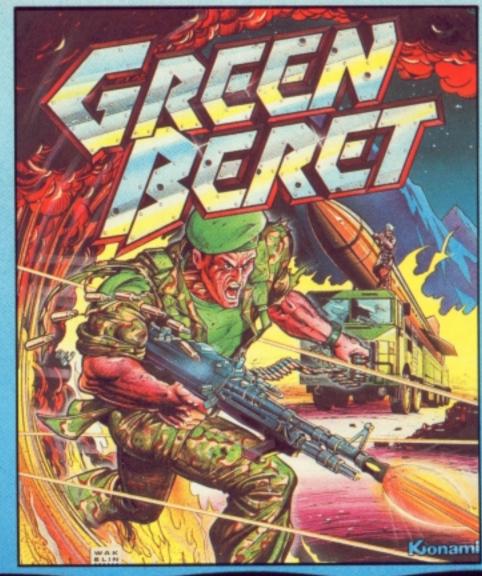
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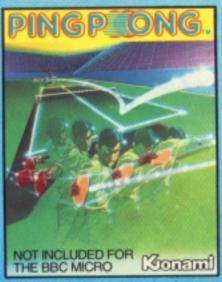
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